

L O V E 'S³
LAST SHIFT;

OR, THE
FOOL IN FASHION.

A
COMEDY:

Written by G. CIBBER.

----- *Fuit hæc Sapientia quondam,
Concubitu prohibere vago, dare jura maritis.*
Hor. de Art. Poet.



L O N D O N,

Printed for the Company of Booksellers;

OVER
AST
THE
MOUNTAIN

COMEDY

Written by G. CARRER.

Printed by J. DODD, at the
Museum, No. 1, Pall Mall.



LONDON

For the Company of Bookellers



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T O

RICHARD NORTON,
of *Southwick*, Esq ;

S I R,

THOU' I can't without ingratitude, conceal the exceeding favours, which the Town have shown this Piece; yet they must give me leave to own, that even my vanity lay hush'd, quite stifled in my fears, till I had securely fixt its good fortune, by publishing your approbation of it: An advantage, which, as it will confirm my friends in their favourable opinion, so it must in some measure, qualify the severity of the malicious. After this declaration, let the world imagine, how difficult it is for me not to launch into your character: But since the smoothness of your temper, and depth of judgement, are my chief protection, I am loath to discompose you, by an ungrateful repetition of those virtues, which only please you in the practice: the world as little wants the knowledge of 'em, as you desire the recital.

'Tis your happiness, Sir, that your fortune has fix'd you above the need of praise, or Friends, yet both are equally unavoidable: For even to your solitude, praise will follow you, and grows sonder of you for your coldness; she loves you for your choice of pleasure, those noble pleasures of a sweet retirement, from which nothing but the consideration of your Country's well cou'd draw you.

The Dedication

But as no Man can properly be made a Patron, whose virtues have not in some sort qualified him for such a care; So, Sir, it is sufficient for me, that your life and conversation are the best heralds of your power and my safety.

Here, Sir, I must beg leave to clear my self from what the ill wishes of some wou'd have the world believe, that what I now offer you is spurious, and not the product of my own labour: And tho' I am pleas'd that this report seems to allow it some beauties, yet I am sorry, it has made a discovery of some Persons, who think me worth their malice. This dedication were little better than an affront, unless I cou'd with all sincerity assure you, Sir, that the Fable is intirely my own; nor is there a line or thought, throughout the whole, for which I am wittingly oblig'd either to the dead, or living; for I cou'd no more be pleas'd with a stol'n Reputation, than with a Mistress who yielded only upon the intercession of my friend: It satisfies me, Sir, that you believe it mine; and I hope what others say to the contrary, is rather owing to an unreasonable disgust, than their real opinion. I am not ignorant of those oversights I have committed; nor have the dissecting Criticks much discourag'd me: For 'tis their diversion to find fault; and to have none, is to them an unpardonable disappointment; no man can expect to go free, while they don't spare one another: But as I write not in defiance of their censure; so, after having diverted you, Sir, I shall not trouble my self for a defensive Preface. Had it not succeeded, I shou'd have had modesty enough to impute it to my own want of merit: For certainly the Town can take no pleasure in decrying any Man's labours, when 'tis their interest to encourage 'em; every Guest is the
best

The Dedication.

best judge of his own pallat, and a Poet ought no more to impose good sense upon the Galleries, than dull farce upon the undisputed judges. I first consider'd who my Guests were, before I prepared my entertainment; and therefore I shall only add this as a general answer to all objections, that it has every way exceeded mine, and hitherto has not wrong'd the House's expectation; that Mr. *Southern's* good-nature (whose own Works best recommend his judgment,) engag'd his reputation for the success, which its reception, and your approbation, Sir, has since redeem'd to the intire satisfaction of

S I R,

Your most devoted,

Humble Servant,

COLLEY CIBBER.

PROLOGUE,

By a FRIEND.

Spoken by Mr. Verbruggen.

WIT bears so thin a crop this duller Age,
We're forc'd to glean it from the barren Stage.
Ev'n Players, fleg'd by nobler pens, take wing
Themselves, and their own rude composures sing.
Nor need our Young-one dread a shipwrack here;
Who trades without a stock has nought to fear.
In every smile of yours, a Prize he draws;
And if you damn him, he's but where he was.
Yet where's the reason for the critick crew,
With killing blasts, like Winter, to pursue
The tender plant, that ripens but for you?
Nature in all her works requireth time,
Kindness, and years, 'tis makes the Virgin climb,
And shoot, and hasten to the expected prime;
And then, if untaught fancy fail to please,
I instruct the willing Pupil by degrees;
By gentle lessons you your joys improve,
And mould her awkward passion into love.
Ev'n Folly has its growth: Few Fools are made;
You drudge, and sweat for't, as it were a trade.
'Tis half the labour of your trifling Age,
To fashion you fit subjects for the Stage.
Well! If our Author fail to draw you like,
In the first draught, you're not to expect Vandike.
What, tho' no master-stroke in this appars;
Yet some may find features resembling theirs.
Nor do the bad alone his colours share;
Neglected Virtue is at least shown fair;
And that's enough o' conscience for a Play'r.
But if you'd have him take a bolder sight;

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PROLOGUE.

And draw your pictures by a truer light;
You must your selves, by follies yet unknown,
Inspire his Pencil, and divert the Town.
Nor judge by this, his genius at a stand;
For time, that makes new Fools, may mend his hand.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Miss Cross, who Sung CUPID.

NOW Gallants, for the Author: first to you
Kind City-Gentlemen o'th' middle-row,
He hopes you nothing to his charge can lay,
There's not one Cuckold made in all his Play.
Nay, you must own, if you'll believe, your eyes,
He draws his Pen against your Enemies:
For he declares to-day, he meerly strives
To maul the Beaux ----- because they maul your Wives.
Now, Sirs, to you, whose sole Religion's drinking,
Whoring, roaring, without the pain of thinking;
He fears h'as made a fault, you'll ne'er forgive,
A crime, beyond the hopes of a reprieve;
An honest Rake forego the joys of life!
His Whores, and Wine! t'Embrace a dull chaste Wife;
Such out of fashion stuff! But then Ogen,
He's lewd for above four Acts, Gentlemen!
For faith he knew, when once he'd chang'd his fortune,
And reform'd his vice, 'twas time --- to drop the curtain.
Four Acts for your course pallats was design'd;
But then the Ladies tast is more refin'd,
They for Amanda's sake will sure be kind.
Pray let this figure once your Pity move,
Can you resist the pleading God of Love!
In vain my pray'rs the other Sex pursue,
Unless your conquering smites their stubborn hearts subdue.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

SIR WILL. WISEWOUND. A rich old Gentleman, that fancies himself a great master of his passion, which he only is in trivial matters.

LOVELESS. Of a bebaucht life, grew weary of his Wife in six months, left her, and the Town, for debts he did not care to pay: and having spent the last part of his Estate beyond sea, returns to *England* in a very mean condition.

SIR NOVELTY FASHION. A Coxcomb that loves to be the first in all foppery.

ELDER WORTHY. A sober Gentleman of a fair Estate, in love with *Hillaria*.

YOUNG WORTHY. His Brother, of a looser temper, Lover to *Narcissa*.

SNAP. Servant to *Loveless*.

SLY. Servant to *Young Worthy*.

A Lawyer.

W O M E N.

AMANDA. A Woman of strict virtue, married to *Loveless* very young, and forsaken by him.

NARCISSA. Daughter to *Will. Wisewound*, a Fortune.

HILLARIA. His Niece.

FLAREIT. A kept Mrs. of *Sir Novelty's*.

Woman to *Amanda*.

Maid to *Flareit*.

Servants, Centinels, Porter, Bullies and
Mufick.

The SCENE LONDON.



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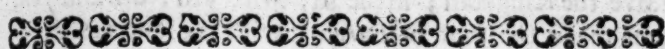
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LOVE'S LAST SHIFT.



A C T. I.

S C E N E *The Park.*

Enter Loveless, and Snap his Servant.

LOVELESS.

Sirrah! leave your preaching... your counsel's like an ill clock, either stands still, or goes too slow... you ne'er thought my extravagancies amiss, while you had your share of 'em; and now I want money to make my self drunk, you advise me to live sober, you Dog... They that will hunt pleasure, as I ha' done, Rascal, must never give over in a fair chase.

Snap. Nay, I knew you wou'd never rest, till you had tir'd your Dogs... ah Sir! what a fine pack of Guineas have you had! and yet you would make them run till they were quite spent... Wou'd I were fairly turn'd out of your service... here we have been three days in Town, and I can safely swear I have liv'd upon picking a hollow tooth ever since.

Love. Why don't you eat then, Sirrah?

Snap. Even, because I don't know where, Sir.

A 5

Love.

12 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

pounds more upon it, or else to get some honest Friend to redeem the mortgage, and share the over-plus. Beside, I thought that *London* might now be a place of uninterrupted pleasure, for I hear my Wife is dead; and to tell you the truth, 'twas the staleness of her love, was the main cause of my going over.

Y. Wor. His Wife dead! Ha! I'm glad he knows no other, I won't undeceive him, lest the Rogue should go and rifle her of what she has. (*Aside.*) Yes faith I was at her burial, and saw her take possession of her long home, and am sorry to tell you, *Ned*, she died with grief: your wild courses broke her heart.

Love. Why faith! she was a good natur'd Fool, that's the truth on't: well! rest her Soul.

Snap. Now Sir, you are a single man indeed, for you have neither Wife, nor Estate.

Y. Wor. But how hast thou improv'd thy money beyond sea? What hast thou brought over?

Love. Oh! a great deal of experience.

Y. Wor. And no money?

Snap. Not a souce, faith, Sir, as my belly can testify.

Love. But I have a great deal more wit than I had.

Snap. Not enough to get your Estate agen, or to know where we shall dine to-day.... (O Lord he don't ask us yet!)

[*Aside.*]

Y. Wor. Why your Rogue's witty, *Ned*, where didst thou pick him up?

Love. Don't you remember *Snap*? formerly your Pimp in ordinary? but he is much improv'd in his calling I assure you, Sir.

Y. Wor. I don't doubt it, considering who has been his Master.

Snap. Yes, Sir, I was an humble servant of yours, and am still, Sir, and shoud be glad to stand behind your chair at dinner, Sir.

[*Bowes.*]

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 13

Y. Wor. Oh Sir, that you may do another time: But to-day I am engag'd upon business. However, there's a meals meat for you. [*Throws him a Guinea.*]

Snap. Bless my eye-sight, a Guinea... Sir! is there e'er a Whore you wou'd have kickt, any old Bawds windows you wou'd have broken? shall I beat your Taylor for disappointing you? or your Surgeon that wou'd be paid for a Clap of two years standing? If you have occasion you may command your humble Servant...

Y. Wor. Sweet Sir, I am oblig'd to you; but at present am so happy, as to have no occasion for your assistance ---- But hark you *Ned*! Prithee what hast thou done with thy Estate?

Love. I pawn'd it to buy pleasure, that is old wine, young Whores, and the conversation of brave fellows, as mad as my self; Pox! If a Man has appetites, they are torments, if not indulg'd! I shall never complain, as long as I have health, and vigour: and as for my poverty, why the Devil shou'd I be asham'd of that, since a rich Man won't blush at his knavery.

Y. Wor. Faith *Ned*, I am as much in love with wickedness, as thou can'st be; but I am for having it at a cheaper rate, than my ruine. Don't it grate you a little to see your friends blush for you?

Love. 'Tis very odd, that people shou'd be more asham'd of others faults, than their own. I never yet cou'd meet with a Man that offer'd me counsel, but had more occasion for it himself.

Y. Wor. So far you may be in the right. For indeed good counsell is like a home jest, which every busie Fool is offering to his fellow, and yet won't take himself.

Love. Right ---- thus have I known a jolly red-nos'd Parson at three a clock in the morning, belch out invectives against late hours, and hard drinking: and a canting hypocritical sinner, protest against Fornication,

14 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

tion, when the Rogue was himself just crawling out of a flux.

Y. Wor. Tho' these are truths Friend, yet I don't see any advantage you can draw from them. Prithee how will you live now, all your money's gone?

Love. Live! How dost thou live? thou art but a younger Brother I take it.

Y. Wor. Oh! very well, Sir, (tho' faith my Father left me but 3000 *l.*) one of which I gave for a place at Court, that I still enjoy; the other two are gone after pleasure, as thou say'st. But beside this, I am supply'd by the continual bounty of an indulgent Brother; now I am loath to load his good-nature too much, and therefore have e'en thought fit, like the rest of my raking brother-hood, to purge out my wild humours with matrimony: By the way I have take care to see the dose well sweetned, with a swinging portion.

Love. Ah! Will, you'll find marrying to cure lewdness, is like surfeiting to cure hunger: For all the consequence is, you loath what you surfeit on, and are only chast to her you marry ... But prithee, Friend, what is thy Wife that must be?

Y. Wor. Why faith, since I believe the matter is too far gone for any Man to postpone me, (at least, I am sure, thou wilt not do me an injury to do thy self no good) I'll tell thee ... you must know, my Mistress is the Daughter of that very Knight to whom you mortgag'd your Estate, Sir William Wiserwou'd.

Love. Why, she's an Heiress, and has 1000 *l.* a year in her own hands, if she be of age: But I suppose the old Man knows nothing of your intentions. Therefore prithee how have you had opportunities of promoting your love?

Y. Wor. Why thus... you must know, Sir William (being very well acquainted with the largeness of my Brothers estate) designs this Daughter for him, and to encourage his passion offers him, out of his own pocket, the

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 15

the additional blessing of 5000 *l.* This offer, my Brother, knowing my inclinations, seems to embrace; but at the same time, is really in love with his Neice, who lives with him in the same house; and therefore to hide my design from the old Gentleman, I pretend visits to his Daughter, as an intercessor for my Brother only: and thus he has given me daily opportunities of advancing my own interest ... nay, and I have so contriv'd it, that I design to have the 5000 *l.* too.

Love. How is that possible, since I see no hopes of the old Mans consent for you?

Y. Wor. Have a days patience, and you'll see the effects on't: in a word, 'tis so sure, that nothing but delays can hinder my success; therefore I am very earnest with my Mistress that to-morrow may be the day. But a pox on't, I have two Women to prevail with; for my Brother quarrels every other day with his Mistress, and while I am reconciling him, I lose ground in my own amour.

Love. Why, has not your Mistress told you her mind yet?

Y. Wor. She will I suppose, as soon as she knows it her self; for within this week, she has chang'd it as often, as her linnen, and keeps it as secret too; for she wou'd no more own her Love before my face, then she wou'd shift her self before my face.

Love. P'shaw! She shews it the more, by striving to conceal it.

Y. Wor. Nay, she does give me some proofs indeed, for she will suffer no body but her self to speak ill of me, is always uneasy till I am sent for, never pleas'd when I am with her, and still jealous when I leave her.

Love. Well! Success to thee *Will*; I will send the Fiddles to release you from your first nights labour.

Y. Wor. But hark you: Have a care of disobliging the Bride, tho' ... Ha! Yonder goes my Brother. I am afraid his

16 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

his walking so early proceeds from some disturbance in his Love; I must after him, and set him right .. Dear Ned you'll excuse me, shall I see you at the Blue Posts between five and six this afternoon?

Love. With all my heart ... but dee ye hear ... can't not thou lend me the fellow to that same Guinea you gave my Man? I'll give you my bond if you mistrust me.

Y. Wor. Oh Sir! Your necessity is obligation enough .. there 'tis and all I have faith; when I see you at night, you may command me farther ... Adieu, at six at farthest.

Exit Y. Wor.

Live. Without fail .. So! Now Rascal, you are an hungry are you? Thou deservest never to eat again.. Rogue! Grumble before Fortune had quite forsaken us!

Snap. Ah! Dear Sir, the thoughts of eating again, have so transported me, I am resolv'd to live and die with you.

Love. Look ye, Sirrah, here's that will provide us of a dinner and a brace of Whores into the bargain, at least as Guineas and Whores goe now.

Snap. Ah! Good Sir! No Whores before dinner I beseech you.

Love. Well, for once I'll take your advice; for to say truth, a Man is as unfit to follow love with an empty stomach, as business with an empty head: Therefore I think a bit and a bottle won't be amiss first.

The Gods of Wine, and Love, were ever Friends;

For by the help of Wine, Love gains his ends. [Exeunt.]

Enter Elder Worthy with a Letter.

E. Wor. How hard 'tis to find that happiness which our short sighted passions hope from Woman! 'Tis not their cold disdain or cruelty shou'd make a faithful Lover curse his Stars, that is but reasonable; 'tis the shadow in our pleasures picture; without it Love cou'd ne'er be heightened! No, 'tis their pride, and vain desire

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 17

of many Lovers, that robs our hope of its imagin'd rapture: The blind are only happy! For if we look through reason's never-erring perspective, we then survey their souls; and view the rubbish we were chaffring for: And such I find *Hillaria's* mind is made of. This Letter is an order for the knocking off my fetters, and I'll send it her immediately.

Enter to him Young Worthy.

Y. Wor. Morrow Brother! (*Seeing the Letter*) what! Is your fit returned again? What Beau's box now has *Hallaria* taken snuff from? What Fool has led her from the Box to her Coach? What Fop has she suffer'd to read a Play or Novel to her? Or whose money has she indiscreetly won at Basset ... come, come, let's see the ghastly wound she has made in your quiet, that I may know how much claret to prescribe you?

E. Wor. I have my wound and cure from the same person, I'll assure you; the one from *Hillaria's* wit and beauty, the other from her pride and vanity.

Y. Wor. That's what I cou'd ne'er yet find her guilty of: are you angry at her loving you?

E. Wor. I am angry at my self, for believing she e'er did.

Y. Wor. Have her actions spoke the contrary? Come you know she loves.

E. Wor. Indeed she gave a great proof on't last night here in the park, by fastning upon a Fool, and caressing him before my face, when she might have so easily avoided him.

Y. Wor. What! And I warrant interrupted you in the middle of your sermon; for I don't question but you were preaching to her. But prithee who was the Fool she fastned upon?

E. Wor. One that Heaven intended for a Man; but the whole business of his life is to make the world believe, he is of another species. A thing that affects mightily

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18 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT, Or,

to ridicule himself, only to give others a kind of necessity of praising him. I can't say he's a Slave to every new Fashion, for he pretends to be the Master of it, and is ever reviving some old, or advancing some new piece of Foppery; and tho' it don't take, is still as well pleas'd, because it then obliges the Town to take the more notice of him: He's so fond of a publick reputation, that he is more extravagant in his attempts to gain it, than the Fool that fir'd *Diana's* Temple, to immortalize his name.

Y. Wor. You have said enough to tell me his name is *Sir Novelty Fashion*.

E. Wor. The same; but that which most concerns me, he has the impudence to address to *Hillaria*, and the vanity enough not to discard him.

Y. Wor. Is this all? Why thou art as hard to please in a Wife, as thy Mistress in a new gown. How many Women have you took in hand, and yet can't please your self at last!

E. Wor. I had need to have the best goods, when I offer so great a price as marriage for them: *Hillaria* has some good qualities, but not enough to make a Wife of.

Y. Wor. She has beauty!

E. Wor. Granted.

Y. Wor. And money.

E. Wor. Too much: Enough to supply her vanity.

Y. Wor. She has sense.

E. Wor. Not enough to believe I am no fool.

Y. Wor. She has wit.

E. Wor. Not enough to deceive me.

Y. Wor. Why then you are happy if she can't deceive you.

E. Wor. Yet she has folly enough to endeavour in I'll see her no more, and this shall tell her so.

Y. Wor. Which in an hour's time you'll repent, much as ever.

E. Wor. As ever I shou'd marrying her.

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 19

Y. Wor. You'll have a damn'd meaking look, when you are forc'd to ask her pardon, for your ungenerous suspicion, and lay the fault upon excess of love.

E. Wor. I am not so much in love as you imagine.

Y. Wor. Indeed, Sir, you are in love, and that Letter tells her so.

E. Wor. Read it, you'll find the contrary:

Y. Wor. Prithee I know what's in't, better than thou dost: You say, 'tis to take your leave of her; but I say 'tis in hopes of a kind excusive answer: But faith you mistake her and your self too; she is too high spirited not to take you at your word; and you are too much in love, not to ask her pardon.

E. Wor. Well then, I'll not be too rash: but will show my resentment in forbearing my visits.

Y. Wor. Your visits! Come, I shall soon try what a Man of resolution you are... for yonder she comes... now, let's see if you have power to move.

E. Wor. I'll soon convince you of that----farewell.

[*Exit.*]

Y. Wor. Ha! Gone! I don't like that: I am sorry to find him so resolute: But I hope *Hillaria* has taken too fast hold of his heart, to let this fit shake him off: I must to her, and make up this breach: For while his amour stands still I have no hopes of advancing my own.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Hillaria, Narcissa, and Amanda, in mourning.

Hil. Well, dear *Amanda*, thou art the most constant Wife I ever heard of: Not to shake off the memory of my ill Husband, after 8 or 10 years absence; nay, to mourn for ought you know for the living too, and such an husband, that tho' he were alive, wou'd never thank you for't: why d'ye persist in such a hopeless grief?

Am. Because 'tis hopeless! For if he be alive, he is dead

20 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

dead to me; his dead affections not Virtues self can e'er retrieve; wou'd I were with him, tho' in his grave!

Hil. In my mind you are much better where you are. The grave! Young Widows use to have warmer wishes. But methinks the death of a rich old Uncle, shou'd be a cordial to your sorrows.

Am. That adds to 'em: for he was the only relation I had left, and was as tender of me, as the nearest: He was a Father to me.

Hil. He was better than some Fathers to you; for he dyed, just when you had occasion for his estate.

Nar. I have an old Father, and the Duce take me, I think he only lives to hinder me of my occasions. But Lord bless me, Madam, how can you be unhappy with 2000 l a year in your own possession?

Hil. For my part, the greatest reason I think you have to grieve, is that you are not sure your Husband's dead; for were that confirm'd, then indeed there were hopes, that one poyson might drive out another, you might marry agen.

Am. All the comfort of my life is, that I can tell my conscience, I have been true to Virtue.

Hil. And to an extravagant Husband, that cares not a farthing for you. But come let's leave this unseasonable talk, and pray give me a little of your advice! what shall I do with this Mr. *Worthy*? wou'd you advise me to make a Husband of him?

Am. I am but an ill Judge of Men; the only one I thought my self secure of, most cruelly deceived me?

Hil. A losing Gamester is fittest to give counsel; what d'ye think of him?

Am. Better than of any Man I know: I read nothing in him but what is some part of a good Man's character.

Hil. He's jealous.

Am. He's a Lover.

Hil. He taxes me with a Fool!

Am. He would preserve your reputation, and a Fool's love

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The FOOL IN FASHION .21

love ends only in the ruin of it.

Hil. Methinks he's nor handfom ?

Am. He's a Man, Madam.

Hil. Why then e'en let him make a Woman of me.

Nar. Pray, Madam, what d'ye think of his Brother?

[*Smiling,*

Am. I wou'd not think of him.

Nar. O dear, why pray ?

Am. He puts me in mind of a Man too like him, one that had beauty, wit, and falsehood ...

Nar. You have hit some part of his Character, I must confess, Madam; but as to his truth, I'm sure he loves only me.

Am. I don't doubt but he tells you so, nay, and swears it too.

Nar. O Lord! Madam, I hope I may without vanity believe him

Am. But you will hardly without magick secure him.

Nar. I shall use no spells, or charms, but this poor face, Madam.

Am. And your Fortune, Madam.

Nar. Senseless malice! (*aside.*) I know he'd marry me without a groat.

Am. Then he' not the Man I take him for.

Nar. Why pray ... what do you take him for?

Am. A wild young fellow, that loves every thing he sees.

Nar. He never lov'd you yet. [*peevishly,*

Am. I hope, Madam, he never saw any thing in me to encourage him.

Nar. In my conscience you are in the right on't, Madam, I dare swear he never did, nor e'er wou'd, tho' he gaz'd till dooms-day.

Am. I hope, Madam, your charms will prevent his putting himself to the tryal, and I wish he may never...

Nar. Nay, dear, Madam, no more railling at him, unless you wou'd have me believe you love him.

Hil.

22 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

Hill. Indeed Ladies you are both in the wrong; you Cousin, in being angry at what you desir'd, her opinion of your Lover; & you, Madam, for speaking truth against the Man she resolves to love.

Nar. Love him, prithee, Cousin, no more of that old stuff.

Hill. Stuff! why? don't you own you are to marry him this week... Here he comes, I suppose you'll tell him another thing in his ear.

Enter Young Worthy.

Hill. Mr. *Worthy*, your Servant! you look with the face of business, what's the news, pray?

Y. Wor. Faith, Madam, I have news for you all, and private news too: But that of the greatest consequence is with this Lady: Your pardon Ladies, I'll whisper with you all, one after another.

Nar. Come, Cousin, will you walk, the Gentleman has business, we shall interrupt him.

Hill. Why really, Cousin, I don't say positively you love Mr. *Worthy*, but I vow this looks very like jealousy.

Nar. Pish! Lord! *Hillaria*, you are in a very odd humour to-day. But to let you see I have no such weak thoughts about me, I'll wait as unconcern'd as your self.

(I'll rattle him.)

[*Aside.*]

Am. Not unpleasing say you? pray, Sir, unfold your self, for I have long despair'd of welcome news.

Y. Wor. Then in a word, Madam, your Husband Mr. *Loveless* is in Town, and has been these three days, I parted with him not an hour ago.

Am. In Town, you amaze me! for Heav'n sake go on.

Y. Wor. Faith, Madam, considering *Italy*, and those parts have furnish'd him with nothing but an improvement of that lewdness he carry'd over; I can't properly give you joy of his arrival: Besides he is so very poor,

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 23

that you wou'd take him for an inhabitant of that country. And when I confirm'd your being dead, he only shook his head, and call'd you good natur'd Fool, or to that effect: Nay, tho' I told him his unkindness broke your heart.

Am. Barbarous Man! not shed a tear upon my grave? But why did you tell him I was dead?

Y. Wor. Because, Madam, I thought you had no mind to have your house plundered; and for another reason, which if you dare listen to me, perhaps you'll not dis-like. In a word 'tis such a stratagem that will either make him ashamed of his folly, or in love with your virtue.

Am. Can there be a hope, when even my death cou'd not move him to a relenting sigh! Yet pray instruct me, Sir.

Y. Wor. You know, Madam, 'twas not above four or five months after you were married, but (as most young Husbands do) he grew weary of you: Now I am confident 'twas more an affectation of being fashionably vicious, than any reasonable dislike, he cou'd either find in your mind or person: Therefore cou'd you by some artifice, pass upon him, as a new Mistress, I am apt to believe you wou'd find none of the wonted coldness in his Love; but a younger heat, and fierce desire.

Am. Suppose this done: What wou'd be the consequence?

Y. Wor. O your having then a just occasion to reproach him with his broken vows, and to let him see the weakness of his deluded fancy, which even in a Wife, while unknown, cou'd find those real charms, which his blind, ungrateful lewdness wou'd ne'er allow her to be Mistress of. After this, I'd have you seem, freely to resign him to those fancy'd raptures, which he deny'd were in a virtuous Woman; who knows but this with a little submissive eloquence, may strike him with so great a sense of shame, as may reform his thoughts, and make him yours?

24 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or

Am. You have reviv'd me, Sir: But how can assure my self he'll like me as a Mistress?

Y. Wor. From your being a new one ... Leave the management of all to me; I have a trick shall draw him to your bed, and when he's there, Faith e'en let him cuckold himself. I'll engage he likes you as a Mistress, tho' he cou'd not as a Wife. At least she'll have the pleasure of knowing the difference between a Husband and a Lover, without the scandal of the former. [*Aside.*]

Am. You have oblig'd me, Sir; if I succeed, the glory shall be yours.

Y. Wor. I'll wait on you at your lodging, and consult how I may be farther serviceable to you: But you must put this in speedy execution, lest he should hear of you, and prevent your designs; in the meantime, 'tis a secret to all the world, but your self and me.

Am. I'll study to be grateful Sir.

Y. Wor. Now for you Madam. [*To Hillaria.*]

Nar. So I am to be last serv'd; very well! [*Aside.*]

Y. Wor. My Brother, Madam, confesses he scatter'd some rough words last night, and I have taken the liberty to tell you, you gave him some provocation.

Hill. That may be; but I'm resolv'd to be Mistress of my actions before marriage, and no Man shall usurp a power over me, till I give it him.

Y. Wor. At least, Madam, consider what he said, as the effects of an impatient passion; and give him leave this afternoon to set all right again.

Hill. Well, If I don't find my self out of order after dinner, perhaps I may step into the Garden: But I won't promise you neither.

Y. Wor. I dare believe you without it ... Now, Madam, I am your humble Servant. [*To Nar.*]

Nar. And every body's humble Servant. [*Walks off.*]

Y. Wor. Why, Madam, I am come to tell you ...

Nar. What success you have had with that Lady, I suppose, I don't mind intrigues, Sir.

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 25

Y. Wor. I like this jealousy however, tho' I scarce know how to appease it. 'Tis business of moment, Madam, and may be done in a moment.

Nar. Yours is done with me, Sir; but my business is not so soon done as you imagine.

Y. Wor. In a word, I have very near reconcil'd my Brother, and your Cousin, and I don't doubt but to-morrow will be the day, if I were but as well assur'd of your consent for my happiness too.

Nar. First tell me your discourse with that Lady; and afterwards if you can, look me in the face. Oh, are you studying, Sir?

Y. Wor. S'Death! I must not trust her with it, she'll tell it the whole Town for a secret... Pox, ne'er a lye!

Nar. You said it was of the greatest consequence too.

Y. Wor. A good hint faith. (*Aside.*) Why, Madam, since you will needs force it from me, 'twas to desire her to advance my interest with you: But all my intreaties cou'd not prevail: For she told me I was unworthy of you: Was not this of consequence, Madam?

Nar. Nay, now I must believe you, Mr. *Worthy*; and I ask your pardon, for she was just railing against you for a Husband, before you came.

Y. Wor. Oh! Madam a favour'd Lover like a good Poem, for the malice of some few, makes the generous temper more admire it.

Nar. Nay, what she said I must confess, had much the same effect, as the Coffee Criticks ridiculing Prince *Arthur*; for I found a pleasing disappointment in my reading you, and till I see your beauty's equal'd, I shan't dis-like you for a few faults.

Y. Wor. Then, since you have blest me with your good opinion let me beg of you, before these Ladies, to compleat my happiness to-morrow. Let this be the last night of your lying alone.

Nar. What de'e mean?

Y. Wor. To marry you to-morrow, Madam.

26 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

Nar. Marry me! Who put that in your head?

Y. Wor. Some smallencouragement which my hopes have form'd, Madam.

Nar. Hopes! Oh Insolence! if it once comes to that, I don't question but you have been familiar with me in your imagination. Marry you! What lye in a naked bed with you! Trembling by your side, like a tame lamb for sacrifice! De'e think I can be mov'd to love a Man, to kiss him, toy with him, and so forth!

Y. Wor. I gad! I find nothing but down right impudence will do with her. (*Aside.*) No, Madam, tis the Man must kiss, and toy with you, and so forth. Come my dear Angel, pronounce the joyful word, and draw the scene of my eternal happiness. Ah! methinks I'm there already, eager and impatient of approaching bliss! just laid within the bridal bed, our friends retir'd, the curtains close drawn around us, no light but *Celia's* eyes, no noise but her soft trembling words, and broken sighs, that plead in vain for mercy: And now a trickling tear steals down her glowing cheek which tells the rushing Lover at length she yields: Yet vows she'd rather dye. But still submits to the unexperienc'd joy. [*Embracing her.*]

Hill. What raptures Mr. *Worthy*!

Y. Wor. Only the force of love in imagination, Madam.

Nar. O Lord! dear Cousin! and Madam! let's be gone, I vow he grows rude! Oh! for Heavens sake! I shant shake off my fright these ten days. O Lord! I will not stay ... begun! for I declare I loath the sight of you. [*Exit.*]

Y. Wor. I hope you'll stand my Friend, Madam.

Hill. I'll get her into the Garden after dinner. [*Exeunt.*]

Y. Wor. I find ther's nothing to be done with my Lady before company, 'tis a strange affected piece ... But there's no fault in her 1000 l. a year, and that's the loadstone that attracts my heart ----- The wife, and grave, may tell us of strange *chimaras* call'd virtues in

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 27

a Woman, and that they alone are the best dowry,
but faith we younger Brothers are of another mind.

Women are changed from what they were of old:
Therefore let Lovers still this maxim hold,
She's only worth that brings her weight in Gold.

[Exit,



A C T. II.

*The SCENE a Garden belonging
to Sir William Wisewoud's House.*

Enter Narcissa, Hillaria, and Sir Novelty Fashion.

HILLARIA.

OH! for Heavens sake! no more of this gallantry,
Sir Novelty. For I know you say the same to
every Woman you see.

Sir Nov. Every one that sees you, Madam, must say
the same. Your beauty, like the rack forces every
beholder to confess his crime... of daring to adore you.

Nar Oh! I han't patience to hear all this! if he be
blind I'll open his eyes... I vow Sir Novelty, you Men
of amour are strange creatures: You think no Woman
worth your while, unless you walk over a Rivals ruine
to her heart; I know nothing has encouraged your
passion to my Couzen more, than her engagement to
Mr. Worshy.

Hill. Poor creature! now is she angry, she han't the
addrefs of a Fop I nauseate.

[Aside.

Sir Nov. Oh! Madam, as to that, I hope the Lady
will easily distinguish the sincerity of her adorers. Tho'

I

28 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,
I must allow Mr. *Worthy* is infinitely the handsomer person!

Nar. O! fye Sir *Novelty*, make not such a preposterous comparison!

Sir Nov. Oh! Ged! Madam, there is no comparison.

Nar. Pardon me Sir; he's an unpolisht Animal.

Sir Nov. Why does your Ladyship really think me tollerable?

Hill. So! she has snapt his heart already. [*Aside.*]

Sir Nov. Pray Madam, how do I look to-day? what, cursedly! I'll warrant with a more hellish complexion, than a stale Actreiss at a Rehearsal ... I don't know Madam --- tis true --- the Town does talk of me indeed --- but the Devil take me in my mind I am a very ugly fellow!

Nar. Now you are too severe, Sir *Novelty*!

Sir Nov. Not I, burn me ---- For Heavens sake deal freely with me, Madam and if you can, tell me ---- one tolerable thing about me.

Hill. 'Twou'd pose me, I'm sure. [*Aside.*]

Nar. Oh! Sir *Novelty* this is unanswerable; 'tis hard to know the brightest part of a diamond.

Sir Nov. You'll make me blush, stop my vitals, Madam --- I gad I always said she was a Woman of sense. Strike me dumb, I am in love with her ---- I'll try her farther (*Aside.*) ---- But Madam, is it possible I may vie with Mr. *Worthy* ---- not that he is any Rival of mine, Madam, for I can assure you my inclinations lye, where perhaps your Ladyship little thinks.

Hill. So! now I am rid of him. [*Aside.*]

Sir Nov. But pray tell me, Madam: For I really love a severe Critick, I am sure you must believe he has a more happy genius in dress: For my part I am but a sloven.

Nar. He a genius! unsufferable! why he dresses worse than a Captain of the Militia. But you Sir *Novelty* are a true original, the very pink of Fashion. I'll warrant there's

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 29

there's not a Milliner in Town, but has got an estate by you?

Sir Nov. I must confess Madam, I am for doing good to my Country: For you see this suit, Madam... I suppose you are not ignorant what a hard time the Ribbon Weavers have had since the late mourning: Now my design is to set the poor Rogues up again, by recommending this sort of trimming: the fancy is pretty well for second mourning,... By the way Madam, I had fifteen hundred Guineas laid in my hand as a gratuity to encourage it. But I gad I refus'd 'em, being too well acquainted with the consequence of taking a bribe, in a national concern.

Hill. A very charitable fashion indeed Sir Novelty! But how if it should not take?

Nar. Ridiculous! take! I warrant you in a week the whole Town will have it: Tho' perhaps Mr. *Worthy* will be one of the last of 'em: He's a meer *Valet de chambre* to all Fashion; and never is in any till his betters have left them off.

Sir Nov. Nay Ged now I must laugh, for the Devil take me, if I did not meet him, not above a fortnight ago, in a coat with buttons no bigger than nutmegs.

Hill. There I must confess you out-do him, Sir Novelty.

Sir Nov. Oh dear, Madam, why mine are not above three inches diameter.

Hill. But methinks, Sir Novelty your sleeve is a little too extravagant.

Sir Nov. Nay, Madam, there you wrong me; mine does but just reach my knuckles. But my Lord *Overdo's* covers his diamond ring.

Hill. Nay, I confess, the fashion may be very useful to you, Gentlemen, that make Campaigns; for should you unfortunately lose an arm, or so, that sleeve might be very convenient to hide the defect on't.

Sir Nov. Ha! I think your Ladship's in the right on't, Madam.

[Hiding his hand in his sleeve]

30 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

Nar. Oh such an air! so becoming a negligence! Upon my Soul, Sir Novelty, you'll be the envy of the Beau-monde!

Hill. Mr. *Worthy*! a good francy were thrown away upon him. But you, Sir are an ornament to your cloaths.

Sir Nov. Then your Landship really thinks they are
... *Bien entendus*!

Hill. *Amerville*, *Monsieur*!

Sir Nov. She has almost as much wit as her Cousen --- I must confess, Madam, this Coat has had a universal approbation. For this morning I had all the eminent Taylors about town at my Levee, earnestly petitioning for the first measure of it: Now, Madam, if you thought 'twou'd oblige Mr. *Worthy*, I wou'd let his Taylor have it before any of 'em.

Nar. See here he comes, and the Duce take me, I think 'twou'd be a great piece of good nature; for I declare he looks as rough as a *Dutch* Corporal... *Prithee*, Sir *Novelty*, lets laugh at him!

Sir Nov. O Ged! No, Madam, that were too cruel: Why you know he can't helpt it.... Lets take no notice of him.

Hill. Wretched Coxcomb.

[*Aside*.

Enter Elder *Worthy*.

E. Wor. I find my resolution is but vain, my feet have brought me hither against my will: But sure I can command my tongue, which I'll bite off, e'er it shall seek a reconciliation. Still so familiar there! But 'tis no matter, I'll try if I can wear indifference, and seem as careless in my Love, as she is of her honour, which she can never truly know the worth of, while she persists to let a Fool thus play with it.... Ladies, your humble servant.

Hill. Now can't I forbear tretting his spleen a little
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The FOOL IN FASHION 31

(*aside.*) Oh! Mr. *Worthy*, we are admiring Sir *Novelty*, and his new Suit: did you ever see so sweet a fancy? He is as full of variety as a good Play.

El. Wor. He's a very pleasant Comedy indeed, *Madam*, and dress'd with a great deal of good Satyr, and no doubt may oblige both the Stage and the Town, especially the Ladies.

Hill. So! There's for me....

[*Aside.*

Sir Nov. O Ged! Nay prithee, *Tom*, you know my humour, Ladies! Stop my vitals! I don't believe there are five hundred in Town that ever took any notice of me.

El. Wor. Oh, Sir, there are some that take so much notice of you, that the Town takes notice of them for't.

Hill. It works rarely.

[*Aside.*

Sir Nov. How of them, *Tom*, upon my account! O Ged, I wou'd not be the ruin of any Lady's reputation for the world: Stop my vitals, I am very sorry for't; Prithee name but one, that has a favourable thought of me, and to convince you that I have no design upon her, I'll instantly visit her in an unpow'd periwig.

El. Wor. Nay, she I mean is a Woman of sense too.

Sir Nov. Phoo! Prithee; Pox, don't banter me: 'Tis impossible! what can she see in me?

El. Wor. Oh, a thousand taking qualities! This Lady will inform you... Come, I'll introduce you [*Pulls him.*

Sir Nov. O Ged no! Prithee! ... Hark you in your Ear... I am off her! Demmy if I ben't, I am stop my vitals.

El. Wor. Wretched Rogue! (*aside.*) Pshaw? no matter, I'll reconcile you. Come, *Madam*.

Hill. Sir!

El. Wor. This Gentleman humbly begs to kiss your hands.

Hill. He needs not your recommendation, Sir.

El. Wor. True! a Fool recommends himself to your
Sex,

32 LOVE's LAST SHIFT; or,
Sex, and that's the reason Men of common sense live
unmarried.

Hill. A Fool without jealousy, is better than a Wit
with ill-nature.

El. Wor. A friendly office, seeing your fault, is ill-na-
ture.

Hill. Believing more than we have is pitiful... You
know I hate this wretch, loath and scorn him.

E. Wor. Fools have a secret art of pleasing Women:
If he did not delight you, you wou'd not hazard your
reputation, by encouraging his Love.

Hill. Dares he wrong my reputation?

El. Wor. He need not; the World will do it for him,
while you keep him company.

Hill. I dare answer it to the World.

El. Wor. Then why not to me?

Hill. To satisfy you were a fondness I never shou'd
forgive my self.

El. Wor. To persist in it, is what I'll ne'er forgive.

Hill. Insolence is it come to this? Never see me more.

El. Wor. I have lost the sight of you already; there
hangs a cloud of folly between you, and the woman
I once thought you.

[*As Hillaria is going off.*

Enter Young Worthy.

Y. Wor. What to our selves in passion we propose,
The passion ceasing does the purpose lose:

Madam, therefore pray let me engage you to stay
a little till your fury is over, that you may see whether
you have reason to be angry, or no.

Sir Nov. (to Nar.) Pray, Madam who is that Gentleman?

Nar. Mr. *Worthy's* Brother, Sir, a Gentleman of
no mean parts, I can assure you.

Sir Nov. I don't doubt it, Madam, ... He has a very
good walk.

The FOOL IN FASHION. 33

Hill. To be jealous of me with a Fool, is an affront to my understanding.

Y. Wor. Tamely to resign your reputation to the merciles vanity of a Fool, were no proof of his love.

Hill. 'Tis questioning my conduct.

Y. Wor. Why you let him kiss your hand last night before his face.

Hill. The Fool diverted me, and I gave him my hand, as I wou'd lend my money, fan, or handkerchief to a Legerdemain, that I might see him play all his tricks over.

Y. Wor. O Madam! no Juggler is so deceietfull as a Fop; for while you look his folly in the face, he steals away your reputation, with more ease, than the other picks your pocket.

Hill. Some Fools indeed are dangerous.

Y. Wor. I grant you, your design is only to laugh at him: But that's more than he finds out: Therefore you must expect he will tell the world another story: And 'tis ten to one, but the consequence makes you repent of your curiosity.

Hill. You speak like an Oracle: I tremble at the thoughts on't.

Y. Wor. Here's one shall reconcile your fears...Brother, I have done your business: *Hillaria* is convinced of her indiscretion, and has a pardon ready for your asking it.

E. Wor. She's the criminal, I have no occasion for it.

Y. Wor. See she comes toward you, give her a civil word at least.

Hill. Mr. *Worthy*, I'll not be behind-hand in the acknowledgment I owe you: I freely confess my folly, and forgive your harsh construction of it: Nay, I'll not condemn your want of good-nature, in not endeavouring, (as your Brother has done,) by mild arguments to convince me of my error.

E. Wor. Now you vanquish me. I blush to be out-
C done

34 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; or,
done in generous love ! I am your Slave, dispose of me
as you please.

Hill. No more: from this hour be you the Master
of my actions , and my heart.

E. Wor. This goodness gives you the power, and
I obey with pleasure.

Y. Wor. So ! I find I han't preach't to no purpose.
Well Madam, if you find him guilty of love, ev'n
let to-morrow be his execution day ; make a Husband
of him , and there's the extent of Loves Law.

E. Wor. Brother I am indebted to you.

Y Wor. Well I'll give you a discharge, ity ouwill
but leave me half an hour in private with that Lady.

Hill. How will you get rid of Sir Novelty ?

Y. Wor. I'll warrant you, leave him to me.

Hill. Come, Mr. Worthy, as we walk, I'll inform
you, how I intend to sacrifice that wretch to your
laughter.

El. Wor. Not, Madam, that I want revenge on so
contemptible a creature: But, I think, you owe this
justice to your self, to let him see (if possible) you
never took him for any other, than what he really is.

Y. Wor. Well ! Pox of your Politicks. Prithee con-
sult of 'em within.

Hill. We'll obey you Sir. ...

[Exeunt Elder Worthy and Hillaria.

Y. Wor. Pray, Madam, give me leave to beg a word
in private with you. Sir, if you please...

[To Sir Novelty who is taking Snuff.

Sir Nov. Ay Sir, with all my heart.

Y. Wor. Sir...

Sir Nov. Nay, 'tis right, I'll assure you.

[Offering his box.

Y. Wor. Ay Sir... but now the Lady wou'd be alone.

Sir Nov. Sir !

Y. Wor. The Lady wou'd be alone, Sir.

Sir Nov. I don't hear her say any such thing.

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 35

Y. Wor. Then I tell you so, and I wou'd advise you to believe me.

Sir Nov. I shall not take your advice, Sir: But if you really think the Lady wou'd be alone, why ... you had best leave her.

Y. Wor. In short, Sir, your company is very unseasonable at present.

Sir Nov. I can tell you, Sir, if you have no more wit, than manners, the Lady will be but scurvily entertain'd.

Nar. Oh fie, Gentlemen, no quarreling before a Woman, I beseech you. Pray let me know the business.

Sir Nov. My business is Love, Madam.

Nar. And yours, Sir?

Y. Wor. What, I hope you are no stranger to, Madam: As for that Spark, you need take no care of him, for if he stays much longer I will do his business myself.

Nar. Well, I vow Love's a pleasant thing, when the Men come to cutting of throats once: O Gad! I'd fain have them fight a little ... Methinks *Narcissa* wou'd sound so great in an expiring Lover's mouth ... Well, I am resolv'd *Sir Novelty* shall not go yet; for I will have the pleasure of hearing my self prais'd a little, though I don't marry this month for't ... Come, Gentlemen, since you both say Love's your business, ev'n plead for your selves, and he that speaks the greater passion, shall have the fairest return.

Y. Wor. Oh, the Devil! now is she rapt with the hopes of a little flattery! There's no remedy but patience. S'Death, what piece have I to work upon!

Nar. Come Gentlemen, one at a time. *Sir Novelty*, what have you to say me?

Sir Nov. In the first place, Madam, I was the first person in England that was complemented with the name of Beau, which is a Title I prefer before Right

36 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,
Honourable: For that may be inherited: But this I
extorted from the whole Nation, by my surprizing
mien, and unexampled gallantry.

Nar. So, Sir!

Sir Nov. Then another thing, Madam, it has been
observed, that I have been eminently successful in those
fashions, I have recommended to the Town; and I
don't question, but this very suit will raise as many
ribbon-weavers, as ever the clipping or melting trade
did Gold-finishes.

Nar. Pish! what does the Fool mean! he says no-
thing of me yet.

Sir Nov. In short Madam, the cravat-string, the
garter, the sword-knot, the centurine, the bardash,
the steinkirk, the large button, the long sleeve, the
plume, and full peruke, were all created, cry'd down,
or revived by me; in a word, Madam, there has
never been any thing particularly taking, or agreeable for
these ten years past, but your humble servant was the
Author of it.

Y. Wor. Where the Devil will this end?

Nar. This is all extravagant, *Sir Novelty*; but what
have you to say to me, Sir?

Sir Nov. I'll come to you presently Madam, I have
just done: Then you must know my Coach and Equi-
page are as well known, as my self; and since the
conveniency of two Play-Houses I have a better op-
portunity of shewing them: For between every Act...
whisk... I am gone from one to th' other... Oh! what
pleasure 'tis at a good Play to go our before half an
Act's done!

Nar. Why at a good Play?

Sir Nov. O! Madam it looks particular, and gives
the whole Audience an opportunity of turning upon me
at once: Then do they conclude I have some extra-
ordinary business, or a Fine Woman to go to at least:
And then again it shews my contempt of what the dul-

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 37

Town think their chiefest diversion: But if I do stay
a Play out, I always set with my back to the Stage.

Nar. Why so Sir?

Sir Nov. Then every body will imagine I have been
tired with it before; or that I am jealous who talks to
who in the Kings Box. And thus, Madam, do I take
more pains to preserve a publick reputation, than ever
any Lady took after the small Pox, to recover her
complexion.

Nar. Well but to the point; What have you to say
to me, Sir *Novelty*?

Y. Wor. Now does she expect some compliment shall
out flatter her glafs.

Sir Nov. To you Madam.. Why I have been saying
all this to you.

Nar. To what end, Sir?

Sir Nov. Why all this have I done for your sake.

Nar. What kindness is it to me?

Sir Nov. Why, Madam, don't you think it more
glory to be beloved by one eminently particular person,
whom all the Town knows and talks of; than to be
ador'd by five hundred dull Souls that have lived in-
cognito?

Nar. That I must confess is a prevailling argument;
but still you han't told me why you love me.

Y. Wor. That's a task he has left for me, Madam.

Sir Nov. 'Tis a province I never undertake; I must
confess, I think 'tis sufficient if I tell a Lady why she
shou'd love me?

Nar. Hang him, he's too conceited; he's so in love
with himself, he won't allow a Woman the bare com-
fort of a complement... Well, Mr. *Worthy*.

Y. Wor. Why, Madam, I have observed several
particular qualities in your Ladyship, that I have per-
fectly ador'd you for; as, the majestick tofs of your
head... Your obliging bow'd curtesie... your satyrical
C 3 smile

38 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; or,

smile ---- your blushing laugh ---- your demure look ---- the careless tye of your hood --- the genteel flirt of your fan --- the designed accident in your letting it fall, and your agreeable manner of receiving it from him that takes it up.

[*They both offer to take up her fan, and in striving*

Y. Worthy pushes Sir Novelty on his back.

Sir Nov. (*Adjusting himself.*) I hope your Ladiship will excuse my disorder, Madam ... How now!

Enter a Footman to Sir Novelty.

Foot. Oh! Sir, Mrs. Flareit ...

Sir Nov. Ha! speak lower, what of her?

Foot. By some unlucky accident has discover'd your being here, and raves like a Mad-woman: She's at your Lodging, Sir, and had broke you above forty pounds worth of *China* before I came away; she talkt of following me hither; and if you don't make haste, I'm afraid will be here before you can get through the house, Sir.

Sir Nov. This Woman is certainly the Devil; her jealousy is implacable, I must get rid of her, though I give her more for a separate maintenance, than her conscience demanded for a settlement before enjoyment... See the Coach ready, and if you meet her, be sure you stop her with some pretended business, till I am got away from hence .. Madam, I ask your Ladiship ten thousand pardons: There's a Person of Quality expects me at my lodging upon extraordinary business.

Nar. What, will you leave us, *Sir Novelty*?

Sir Nov. As unwillingly as the Soul the body: But this is an irresistible occasion! .. Madam, your most devoted Slave .. Sir, your most humble Servant .. Madam, I kiss your hands ... Oh Ged, no farther dear Sir, upon my soul I won't stir if you do --

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 39

Young Worthy *sees him to the door.*] [*Exit Sir Nov.*]

Y. Wor. Nay then Sir, Your humble Servant: So! this was a lucky deliverance

Nar. I over heard the business. ... You see, Mr. Worthy, a Man must be a slave to a Mistress sometimes, as well as a Wife; Yet all can't persuade your Sex to a favourable opinion of poor marriage.

Y. Wor. I long, Madam, for an opportunity to convince you of your error; and therefore give me leave to hope to-morrow you will free me from the pain of further expectation, and make an Husband of me .. Come, I'll spare your blushes, and believe I have already nam'd the day.

Nar. Had not we better consider a little?

Y. Wor. No, let's avoid consideration, 'tis an enemy both to Love and Courage: They that consider much, live to be old Batchelors, and young Fighters. No! no! we shall have time enough to consider after Marriage... But why are you so serious Madam?

Nar. Not but I do consent to-morrow shall be the day, Mr. Worthy: But I'm afraid you have not lov'd me long enough to make our marriage be the Town-talk: For 'tis the fashion now to be the Town-talk; and you know one had as good be out of the World, as out of the Fashion.

Y. Wor. I don't know, Madam, what you call Town-talk; but it has been in the News-Letters above a fortnight ago, that we were already married. Beside, the last Song I made of you, has been sung at the Musick meeting; and you may imagine, Madam, I took no little care to let the Ladies and the Beaux know who 'twas made on.

Nar. Well, and what said the Ladies?

Y. Wor. What was most observable, Madam, was, that while it was singing my Lady Manlove went out in a great passion.

Nar. Poor jealous animal! on my conscience that

40 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,
charitable creature has such a fund of kind compliance
for all young fellows, whose lovelies dead upon their
hands, that she has been as great a hindrance to us
vertuous Women, as ever the Bank of *England* was to
City Goldsmiths.

Y. Wor. The reason of that is, Madam, because
you vertuous Ladies pay no interest: I must confess
the principal, our health, is a little securer with you.

Nar. Well, and is not that an advantage worth en-
tring into bonds for? not but I vow we vertuous De-
vils do love to insult a little; and to say truth, it looks
too credulous, and easy in a Woman to encourage a
Man before he has sigh'd himself to a skeleton.

Y. Wor. But Heaven be thank't, we are pretty even
with you in the end: For the longer you hold us off
before marriage, the sooner we fall off after it.

Nar. What then, you take marriage to be a kind
of Jesuits powder, that infallibly cures the fever of Love?

Y. Wor. 'Tis indeed a Jesuits powder; for the Priests
first invented it: And only abstain'd from it, because
they knew it had a bitter taste; then guil'd it over
with a pretended blessing, and so palm'd it upon the
unthinking Laity.

Nar. Prithee don't scrue your wit beyond the com-
pass of good manners... D'ye think I shall be turn'd to
Matrimony by your railling against it? If you have so
little stomach to it, I'll ev'n make you fast a week
longer.

Y. Wor. Ay, but let me tell you, Madam, 'tis no
policy to keep a Lover at a thin diet, in hopes to
raise his appetite on the wedding night, for then
We come like starving Beggars to a Feast,
Where unconfin'd we feed with eager haste,
Till each repeated morsel palls the taste.

Marriage gives Prodigals a boundless treasure,
Who squander that, which might be lasting pleasure,
And women think they ne'er have over measure.

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ACT. III.

The SCENE Sir William Wisewoud's House.

Enter Amanda and Hillaria meeting.

A M A N D A.

MY dear, I have news for you.

Hill. I guess at it, and wou'd be fain satisfied of the particulars: Your Husband is returned, and I hear knows nothing of your being alive: Young *Wor-thy* has told me of your design upon him

Am. 'Tis that I wanted your advice in; what think you of it?

Hill. O! I admire it: Next to forgetting your Husband, 'tis the best counsel was ever given you: for under the disguise of a Mistress, you may now take a fair advantage of indulging your love, and the little experience you have had of it already, has been just enough not to let you be afraid of a Man.

Am. Will you never leave your mad humour?

Hill. Not till my youth leaves me: Why should Women affect ignorance among themselves? When we converse with Men indeed, modesty and good-breeding oblige us not to understand, what sometimes we can't help thinking of.

Am. Nay I don't think the worse of you for what you say: For 'tis observed that a bragging Lover, and an over-shy Lady, are the farthest from what they would seem; the one is as seldom known to receive a favour, as the other to resist an opportunity.

C 5

Hill.

42. LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; OR

Hill. Most Women have a wrong sense of modesty, as some Men of courage; if you don't fight with all you meet, or run from all you see, you are presently thought a Coward, or an ill Woman.

Am. You say true, and 'tis as hard a matter now a days for a Woman to know how to converse with Men, as for a Man to know when to draw his sword: For many times both Sexes are apt to over act their parts. To me the rules of Virtue have been ever sacred; and I am loath to break 'em by an unadvised understanding: Therefore, dear *Hillaria*, help me, for I am at a loss... Can I justifie, think you, my intended design upon my Husband?

Hill. As how, prithee?

Am. Why, if I court and conquer him, as a Mistress, am not I accessory to his violating the bonds of marriage? For though I am his Wife, yet while he loves me not as such, I encourage an unlawful passion; and though the act be safe, yet his intent is criminal. How can I answer this?

Hill. Very easily, for if he don't intrigue with you, he will with some body else in the mean time; and I think you have as much right to his remains as any one.

Am. Ay! but I am assured the love he will pretend to me is vicious: And 'tis uncertain, that I shall prevent his doing worse elsewhere.

Hill. 'Tis true, a certain ill ought not to be done for an uncertain good. But then again of two evils choose the least; and sure 'tis less criminal to let him love you as a Mistress, than to let him hate you as a Wife. If you succeed, I suppose you will easily forgive your guilt in the undertaking.

Am. To say truth, I find no argument yet strong enough to conquer my inclination to it. But is there no danger, think you, of his knowing me?

Hill. Not the least, in my opinion: In the first place

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 43

he confidently believes you are dead: Then he has not seen you these eight or ten years: Besides, you were not above sixteen when he left you: This, with the alteration the small-pox have made in you, (tho' not for the worse.) I think, are sufficient disguises to secure you from his knowledge.

Am. Nay, and to this I may add the considerable amendment of my Fortune; for when he left me I had only my bare jointure for a subsistence: Beside my strange manner of receiving him.

Hill. That's what I wou'd fain be acquainted with.

Am. I expect further instructions from Young *Worthy* every moment; then you shall know all, my dear.

Hill. Nay he will do you no small service: For a Thief is the best Thief-catcher.

Enter a Servant to Amanda.

Ser. Madam, your Servant is below, who says young Mr. *Worthy's* Man waits at your lodgings with earnest business from his Master.

Am. 'Tis well ... Come, my Dear I must have your assistance too.

Hill. With all my heart, I love to be at the bottom of a secret: For they say the Confident of an Amour, has sometimes more pleasure in the observation, than the parties concern'd in the enjoyment. But methinks, you don't look with a good heart upon the business.

Am. I can't help a little concern in a business of such moment: For though my reason tells me my design must prosper; yet my fears say 'twere happiness too great ... Oh! to reclaim the Man I'm bound by Heaven to love, to expose the folly of a roving mind in pleasing him with what he seem'd to loath, were such a sweet revenge for slighted Love, so vast a triumph of rewarded Constancy, as might persuade the looser part of Wo nankind ev'n to forsake themselves, and fall in love with Virtue.

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44 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

Re-Enter the Servant to Hillaria.

Ser. Sir Novelty Fashion is below in his Coach, Madam, and enquires for your Ladiship, or Madam Narcissa.

Hill. You know my Cousin is gone out with my Lady Tattle tongue: I hope you did not tell him I was within!

Serv. No, Madam, I did not know if your Ladiship wou'd be spoke with, and therefore came to see.

Hill. Then tell him I went with her.

Serv. I shall, Madam.

[Exit Servant.

Hill. You must know my dear, I have sent to that Fury Mrs. Flareit, whom this Sir Novelty keeps, and have stung her to some purpose with an account of his passion for my Cousin: I ow'd him a Quarrel, for that he made between Mr. Worthy and me, and I hope her jealousy will severely revenge it; therefore I sent my Cousin out of the way, because unknown to her, her name is at the bottom of my design... Here he comes. Prithcee, my Dear, let's go down the back-stairs, and take Coach from the Garden...

[Exit Am. and Hill.

Re-enter the Servant conducting Sir Novelty

Sir Nov. Both the Ladies abroad, say you? Is Sir William within?

Serv. Yes Sir, if you please to walk in, I'll acquaint him that you expect him here.

Sir Nov. Do so prithcee... and in the mean time let me consider what I have to say to him... Hold! In the first place his daughter is in love with me! Wou'd I marry her? Noh! Demm it, 'tis mechanical to marry the Woman you love: Men of Quality shou'd always marry those they never saw... But I hear Young Worthy

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 45

marries her to-morrow ! which if I prevent not, will spoil my design upon her ? Let me see ! ... I have it... I'll persuade the old Fellow, that I wou'd marry her my self ! upon which she immediately rejects Young *Worthy*, and gives me free access to her ! Good ! What follows upon that ? Opportunity, importunity... resistance, force, intreaty, persifling ! ... doubting, swearing, lying... blushes, yielding, victory, pleasure ! ... Indifference, O ! here he comes in *ordine ad* ----

Enter Sir William Wisewound.

Sir Will. Sir *Novelty*, your Servant, have you any commands for me, Sir ?

Sir Nov. I have some proposals to make, Sir, concerning your hapiness and my own, which perhaps will surprize you. In a word Sir, I am upon the very brink of matrimony.

Sir Will. 'Tis the best thing you can pursue, Sir, considering you have a good estate.

Sir Nov. But whom do you think I intend to marry ?

Sir Will. I can't imagine : dear Sir, be brief, lest your delay transport me into a crime I wou'd avoid, which is impatience. Sir pray go on.

Sir Nov. In fine, Sir, 'tis to your very Daughter, the fair *Narcissa*.

Sir Will. Humh ! Pray, Sir, how long have you had this in your head ?

Sir Nov. Above these two hours, Sir.

Sir Will. Very good ! then you ha'n't slept upon't ?

Sir Nov. No ! nor shan't sleep, for thinking on't ; did not I tell you I wou'd surprize you ?

Sir Will. O ! you have indeed, Sir, I am amaz'd ! I am amaz'd !

Sir Nov. Well, Sir, and what think you of my proposal ?

Sir Will. Why truly, Sir, I like it not : But if I did, 'tis now too late ; my daughter is dispos'd of to a Gentleman

46 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,
Gentleman, that she and I like very well; at present, Sir,
I have a little business, if this be all, your humble Ser-
vant, I am in haste.

Sir Nov. Demmee! what an insensible Blockhead's
this? Hold, Sir, dee hear-----is this all the acknow-
ledgment you make for the honour I design'd you?

Sir Will. Why truly, Sir, 'tis an honour, that I am
not ambitious of: in plain terms, I do not like you
for a Son in Law.

Sir Nov. Now you speak to the purpose, Sir: But
prithee what are thy exceptions to me?

Sir Will. Why in the first place, Sir, you have too
great a passion for your own person, to have any for
your Wives: In the next place you take such an extra-
vagant care in the cloathing your body that your understand-
ing goes naked for't: Had I a Son so dress'd, I should
take the liberty to call him an egregious Fop.

Sir Nov. I Gad thou art a comical old Gentleman,
and I'll tell thee a secret: Understand then, Sir, from
me, that all young fellows hate the name of Fop, as
Women do the name of Whore: But I Gad they both
love the pleasure of being so: Nay Faith, and 'tis as hard
a matter for some Men to be Fops, as you call 'em,
as 'tis for some Women to be Whores.

Sir Will. That's pleasant, I faith! can't any Man be
a fop, or any Woman be a whore, that has a mind to't?

Sir Nov. No Faith, Sir; for let me tell you, 'tis
not the coldness of my Lady *Freelove's* inclination, but
her age and wrinkles, that won't let her cuckold her
Husband. And again, 'tis not Sir *John Woudlook's*
aversion to dress, but his want of a fertile genius, that
won't let him look like a Gentleman: Therefore in
vindication of all well-dress'd Gentlemen, I intend to
write a Play, where my chiefest Character shall be a
down-right English Booby, that affects to be a Beau,
without either genius or foreign education, and to call
it in imitation of another Famous Comedy, *He won't*
if he cou'd: And now I think you are answer'd, Sir

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 47

Have you any exceptions to my Birth, or Family, pray Sir?

Sir Will. Yes, Sir, I have: you seem to me the offspring of more than one Man's labour; for certainly no less than a dancing, singing, and fencing-Master, with a Taylor, Milliner, Perfumer, Peruque-Maker, and French Vallet-de-Chambre, cou'd be at the begetting of you.

Sir Nov. All these have been at the finishing of me since I was made.

Sir Will. That is, Heaven made you a Man, and they have made a monster of you: And so farewell to ye.

[*Is going.*

Sir Nov. Hark ye, Sir, am I to expect no farther satisfaction in the proposals I made you?

Sir Will. Sir... Nothing makes a Man lose himself like passion: Now I presume you are young, and consequently rash upon a disappointment; therefore to prevent any difference that may arise by repeating my refusal of your suit, I do not think it convenient to hold any farther discourse with you.

Sir Nov. Nay, faith thou shalt stay to hear a little more of my mind first.

Sir Will. Since you press me, Sir, I will rather bear than resist you.

Sir Nov. I doubt, old Gentleman, you have such a torrent of Philosophy running through your *pericranium*, that it has wash'd your brains away.

Sir Will. Pray, Sir, why do you think so?

Sir Nov. Because you choose a beggarly unaccountable sort of younger brotherish Rakehell for your Son-in-Law, before a Man of Quality, Estate, good parts and breeding, demmy!

Sir Will. Truly, Sir, I know neither of the persons to whom these characters belong; if you please to write their names under 'em, perhaps I may tell you, if they be like or no.

Sir

48 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

Sir Nov. Why then, in short, I wou'd have been your Son-in-Law; and you, it seems, prefer young *Worthy* before me. Now are your eyes open?

Sir Will. Had I been blind, Sir, you might have been my Son-in-law; and if you were not blind, you wou'd not think that I design my Daughter for young *Worthy*. His Brother. I think, may deserve her.

Sir Nov. Then you are not jealous of young *Worthy*? humh!

Sir Will. No really, Sir, nor of you neither.

Sir Nov. Give me thy hand, thou art very happy: stop my vitals; for thou dost not see thou art blind: Not jealous of young *Worthy*? Ha! ha! How now!

Enter Sir Novelty's Servant with a Porter.

Serv. Sir, here's a Porter with a letter for your Honour.

Porter. I was ordered to give it into your own hands, Sir, and expect an answer.

Sir Nov. (Reads) *Excuse, my dear Sir Novelty, the forc't indifference I have shewn you, and let me recompence your past sufferings with an hours conversation after the Play at Rosamond's pond, where you will find an hearty welcome to the arms of your Narcissa. Unexpected happiness! The arms of your Narcissa! I gad and when I am there, I'll make my self welcome.*

Faith I did not think she was so far gone neither. But I don't question there are five hundred more in her condition. ... I have a good mind not to go faith. Yet hang it, I will though, only to be revenged on this old Fellow! Nay, I'll have the pleasure of making it publick too: For I will give her the Musick, and draw all the Town to be witness of my Triumph. Where is the Lady....

[To the Porter]

Porter. In a hackney-Coach at the corner of the Street.

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 49

Sir. Nov. Enough, tell her I will certainly be there ...

[Exit Porter.]

Well, Old Gentleman! then you are resolv'd I shall be no kin to you? Your Daughter is disposed of: Humh!

Sir Will. You have your answer, Sir, you shall be no kin to me.

Sir Nov. Farewell old Philosophy: And d'ee hear I wou'd advise you to study nothing but the art of patience: You may have an unexpected occasion for it. Hark you! wou'd not it nettle you damnable to hear my Son call you Grandfather?

Sir Will. Sir----- Notwithstanding this provocation I am calm; but were I like other Men, a Slave to passion, I shou'd not forbear calling you impertinent! How I swell with rising vexation .. Leave me, leave me, go Sir, go, get you out of my house. [Angrily.]

Sir Nov. Oh! have a care of passion, dear Diogenes, ha! ha! ha! ha!

Sir Will. So! (*sighing*) at last I have conquer'd it: I pray Sir oblige me with your absence (*taking off his hat.*) I protest I am tired with you, pray leave my house.

[Submissively.]

Sir Nov. Damn your house, your Family, your ancestors, your Generation, and your eternal Posterity.

[Exit.]

Sir Will. Ah! A fair riddance; how I bless myself, that it was not in this Fools power to provoke me beyond that serenity of temper, which a wise Man ought to be master of. How near are Men to Brutes, when their unruly passions break the bounds of reason? Of all passions, anger is the most violent, which then puts me in mind of that admirable saying,

*He that strives not to stem his angers tide,
Does a mad horse without a bridle ride.*

50 LOVE's LAST SHIFT; Or,

The SCENE changes to St. James's Park.

Enter Y. Worthy and Loveless as from the Tavern ... Snap following.

Y. Wor. What a sweet evening 'tis ... Prithee Ned lets walk a little ... Look how lovingly the trees are joyned, since thou wert here, as if Nature had design'd this walk for the private shelter of forbidden love.

Several crossing the Stage.

Look here are some for making use of the convenience.

Love. But, hark ye, Friend, are the Women as tame and civil as thy were before I left the Town? Can they endure the smell of tobacco, or vouchsafe a Man a word with a dirty cravat on?

Y. Wor. Ay, that they will; for keeping is almost out of fashion: so that now an honest fellow with a promising back need not fear a nights lodging for bare good fellowship.

Love. If whoring be so poorly encourag'd, methinks the Women shou'd turn honest in their own defence.

Y. Wor. Faith I don't find there's a Whore the less for it; the pleasure of fornication is still the same; all the difference is, lewdness is not so barefac'd as heretofore ... Virtue is as much debas'd as our money, for maidenheads are as scarce as our mill'd half-crowns, and faith, *Dei gratia* is as hard to be found in a Girl of sixteen, as round the brims of an old Shilling.

Love. Well, I find, in spite of law and duty, the flesh will get the better of the spirit. But I see no game yet ... Prithee *Will*, let's go and take t'other bumper to enliven assurance, that we may come down right to the business.

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THE FOOL IN FASHION. 51

Y. Wor. No, no; what we have in our bellies already, by the help of a little fresh air, will soon be in our *pericraniums*, and work us to a right pitch, to taste the pleasures of the night.

Lov. The day thou mean'st; my day always breaks at Sun-set. We wise fellows, that know the use of life, know too that the Moon lights men to more pleasures than the Sun, ... the Sun was meant for dull souls of business, and poor rogues that have a mind to save candles.

Y. Wor. Nay, the night was always a friend to pleasure, and that made *Diana* run a whoring by the light of her own horns.

Lov. Right: And, prithee what made *Daphne* run away from *Apollo*, but that he wore so much day light about his ears?

Y. Wor. Ha! Look out *Ned*, there's the enemy before you!

Lov. Why then, as *Cæsar* said, come follow me.

[Exit Loveless.]

Y. Wor. I hope 'tis his Wife, whom I desir'd to meet me here, that she might take a view of her Soldier before the new mounted him.

[Exit.]

Enter Mrs. Flareit and her Maid.

Ma. I wonder, Madam, Sir *Novelty* don't come yet: I am so afraid he shou'd see *Narcissa*, and find out the trick of your Letter.

Fla. No! no! *Narcissa* is out of the way: I am sure he won't be long; for, I heard the *Hautbois*, as they pass'd by me, mention his name; I suppose to make the intrigue more fashionable, he intends to give me the musick.

Ma. Suppose he do take you for *Narcissa*, what advantage do you propose by it?

Fla. I shall then have a just occasion to quarrel with him for his perfidiousness, and so force his pocket to

52 LOVE's LAST SHIFT; Or;

make his peace with me. Beside, my jealousy will not let me rest till I am reveng'd.

Ma. Jealousie! why, I have often heard you say, you loath'd him.

Fla. 'Tis my pride, not love, that makes me jealous: For, tho' I don't love him, yet I am incens'd to think he dares love another.

Ma. See, Madam, here he is, and the musick with him.

Fla. Put on your mask, and leave me... [*They mask.*]

Enter Sir Novelty with the Musick.

Sir Nov. Here, Gentlemen, place your selves on this spot, and pray oblige me with a trumpet Sonata, [*The Musick prepare to play.*] ... This taking a Man at his first word, is a very new way of preserving reputation, stop my vitals ... nay, and a secure one too; for now may we enjoy and grow weary of one another, before the Town can take any notice of us. [*Flareit making towards him.*] Ha! this must be she ... I suppose, Madam, you are no stranger to the contents of this Letter.

Fla. Dear Sir, this place is too publick for my acknowledgment, if you please to withdraw to a more private conveniency. [*Exeunt*]

The Musick prepare to play, and all sorts of People gather about it. Enter at one door Nar. Hill. Am.

El. Worthy, and Y. Worthy; at another Loveless and Snap, who talk to the Masks.

El. Wor. What say you Ladies, shall we walk homewards? It begins to be dark.

Y. Wor. Prithee don't be so impatient, it's light enough to hear the musick, I'll warrant ye.

Am. Mr. Worthy, you promis'd me a fight I long for: Is Mr. Loveless among all those!

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Nar. Prot

The FOOL IN FASHION. 53

Y. Wor. That's he, Madam, a surveying that masked Lady.

Am. Ha! Is't possible! Methinks I read his vices in his person! Can he be insensible, ev'n to the smart of pinching poverty! Pray, Sir, your hand... I find my self disorder'd. It troubles me to think I dare not speak to him after so long an absence.

Y. Wor. Madam your staying here may be dangerous, therefore let me advise you to go home, and get all things in order to receive him. About an hour hence will be a convenient time to set my design a-going; till when let me beg you to have a little patience: Give me leave Madam, to see you to your Coach.

Am. I'll not trouble you, Sir, yonder's my Cousin Welbred, I'll beg his protection. [Exit.]

The Musick plays, after which Nar. speaks.

Nar. I vow it's very fine, considering what dull souls our Nation are: I find 'tis an harder matter to reform their manners than their Government, or Religion.

E. Wor. Since the one has been so happily accomplish'd, I know no reason why we should despair of the other: I hope in a little time to see our Youth return from travel big with praises of their own country. But come, Ladies, the Musick's done I suppose, shall we walk?

Nar. Time enough, why you have no taste of the true pleasure of the Park: I'll warrant you hate as much to ridicule others, as to hear your self prais'd; for my part, I think a little harmless railing's half the pleasure of ones life.

E. Wor. I don't love to create my self enemies by observing the weakness of other people; I have more faults of my own than I know how to mend.

Nar. Protect me! How can you see such a medley

54 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,
of human stuffs as here is, without venting your spleen?
... Why look there now, is not it comical to see that
wretched creature there with her autumnal face, dress'd
in all the colours of the spring?

E. Wor. Pray, who is she. Madam?

Nar. A thing that won't believe her self out of date,
though she was a known Woman at the Restauration.

Y. W. O! I know her, 'tis Mrs. Holdout, one that
is proud of being an original of fashionable fornication,
and values her self mightily for being one of the first
Mistresses that ever kept her Coach publickly in England.

Hill. Pray who's that impudent young fellow there?

E. Wor. Oh, that's an eternal fan-tearer, and a con-
stant persecuter of Woman-kind: He had a great mis-
fortune lately.

Nar. Pray what was it?

E. W. Why, impudently presuming to cuckold a
Dutch-Officer, he had his fore-teeth kick'd out.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Nar. There's another too, Mr. *Worthy*, do you
know him?

Y. W. That's Beau *Noisy*, one that brags of favours
from my Lady, tho' refused by her Woman; that sups
with my Lord, and borrows his club of his Footman;
that beats the Watch, and is kick'd by his companions;
that is one day at Court, and the next in jail; that goes
to Church without Religion, is valiant without courage,
witty without sense, and drunk without measure.

E. W. A very compleat Gentleman.

Hill. Prithee Cousin, who's that over-shy Lady there,
that won't seem to understand what that brisk young
Fellows says to her?

Nar. Why, that's my Lady *Slylove*: That other cere-
monious Gentleman is her Lover: She is so over-modest
that she makes a scruple of shifting her self before her
Woman, but after wards makes none of doing it before
her Gallant.

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 35

Y. W. Hang her, she's a jest to the whole Town: For, tho' she has been the Mother of two byblows, she endeavours to appear as ignorant in all companys as if she did not know the distinction of sexes.

Nar. Look, Look! Mr. *Worthy*, I vow there's the Countess of *Incog*. out of her dishabillee, in a high head, I protest!

Y. W. 'Tis as great a wonder to see her out of an Hackny-coach as out of debt, or ...

Nar. Or out of countenance.

Y. W. That, indeed, she seldom changes; for she is never out of a mask, and is so well known in't, that when she has a mind to be private, she goes bare-fac'd.

Nar. But come, Cousin, now let's see what *Monsters* the next walk affords.

E. W. With all my heart, 'tis in our way home.

Y. W. Ladies, I must beg your pardon for a moment, yonder comes one I have a little business with, I'll dispatch it immediately; and follow you.

Hill. No, no, well stay for you.

Nar. You may, if you please, Cousin; but, I suppose, he will hardly thank you for't.

Hill. What, then you conclude 'tis a *Womans* business, by his promising a quick dispatch?

Y. W. Madam, in three minutes you shall know the business; if it displease you, condemn me to an eternal absence.

E. W. Come, Madam, let me be his security.

Nar. I dare take your word, Sir...

[*Exeunt* E. W. Hill. and Nar.]

Enter Sly, *Servant* to *Young Worthy*.

Y. W. Well! how go matters, is she in a readiness to receive him?

Sly. To an hair, Sir, every *Servant* has his cue, and all are impatient till the *Comedy* begins.

36 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; OR

Y. W. Stand aside a little, and let us watch our opportunity.

Snap, [To a Mask] Enquire about half an hour hence for number Two, at the Gridiron.

Mask, To-morrow with all my heart, but to-night I am engaged to the Chaplain of Colonel Thunder's Regiment.

Snap, What, will you leave me for a mutton-chop, for that's all he'll give you, I'm sure.

Mask, Your are mistaken, faith he keeps me.

Snap, Not to himself, I'll engage him: Yet he may too, if no body likes you no better than I do. Hark you Child, prithee when was your smock wash'd?

Mask, Why dost thou pretend to fresh linen, that never wore a clean shirt but of thy Mothe's own washing?

[Goes from him.]

Lov. What, no adventure, no game, Snap?

Snap, None, none, Sir; I can't prevail with any, from the point headcloths to the Horse Guard Whore.

Lov. What-a-Pox! sure the Whores can't smell an empty pocket.

Snap, No, no, that's certain, Sir, they must see it in our faces.

Sly. [to Loveless] My dear Boy, how is't? I gad, I am glad thou art come to Town: My Lady expected you above an hour ago, and I am overjoy'd I have found thee: Come, come, come along, she's impatient till she sees you.

Snap, Odsbud, Sir, follow him, he takes you for another.

Lov. I-gad, it looks with the face of an intrigue... I'll humour him...: Well, what, shall we go now?

Sly. Ay, ay, now it's pure and dark, you may go undiscover'd.

Lov. That's what I would do.

Sly. Ods heart, she longs to see thee, and she is a curious fine Creature, ye Rogue! such eyes! such lips

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The FOOL IN FASHION 57

lips! ... and such a tongue between 'em! ah, the tip of it will set a Mans soul on fire!

Love. [*aside*] The Rogue makes me impatient!

Sly. Come come, the key, the key, the key, you dear Rogue!

Snap. O Lord, the key, the key! [*Aside.*]

Love. The key: why sh ... sh ... sh ... shu'd yo ... o ... you have it?

Sly. Ay, ay! Quickly, give's it!

Love. Why ... what the Devil ..., sure I han't lost it ...; oh! no gad, t'is not there ...; What the Devil shall we do?

Sly. Oon's, ne'er stand fumbling, if you have lost it we must shoot the lock, I think.

Love. I-gad, and so we must, for I han't it.

Sly. Come, come along, follow me.

Love. *Snap*, Stand by me, you Dog.

Snap, Ay, ay, Sir. [*Exeunt Sly, Loveless, and Snap.*]

Y. W. Ha, ha! the rogue managed him most dexterously; how greedily he chopt at the bait; What the event will be, Heaven knows; but thus far 'tis pleasant; and since he is safe, I'll venture to divert my company with the Story. Poor *Amanda*, thou well deservest a better Husband: Thou wert never wanting in thy endeavours to reclaim him: And, faith, considering how a long despair has worn thee,

'Twere pity now thy hopes should not succeed;

This new attempt is Love's last shift indeed.



A C T I V.

The SCENE continues.

Enter Two Bullies, and Sir William Wisewou'd observing them.

1st. BULLY,

Damme! Jack, let's after him, and fight him; 'tis not to be put up.

2d. Bull. No! dam him! nobody saw the affront, and what need we take notice of it?

1st. Bul. Why that's true! ... But damme! I have much ado to forbear cutting his throat.

Sir Will. Pray Gentlemen, what's the matter? Why are you in such a passion?

1st. B. What's that to you, Sir? What wou'd you have?

Sir Will. I hope, Sir, a Man may ask a civil question.

1st. B. Damme! Sir, we are Men of honour, we dare answer any Man.

Sir Will. But why are you angry, Gentlemen? Have you received any wrong?

2d B. We have been called Rascals, Sir, have had the lye given us, and had like to have been kickt!

Sir Will. But I hope, you were not kickt, Gentlemen.

2d. B. How, Sir! we kickt!

Sir Will. Nor do I presume, that you are Rascals.

1st. B. Bloud! and Thunder! Sir, let any Man say, it that wears an head! we Rascals!

Sir Will. Very good! since then you are not Rascals, he rather was one, who maliciously call'd you so: ... Pray take my advice, Gentlemen; never disturb your
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The FOOL IN FASHION. 59

selfes, for any ill your enemy says of you; for from an enemy the world will not believe it: Now you must know, Gentlemen, that a flea-bite is to me more offensive, than the severest affront any man can offer me:

1st. B. What, and so you wou'd have us put it up! Damme! Sir, don't preach cowardice to us, we are Men of valour: you won't find us Cowards, Sir.

2d. B. No, Sir, we are no Cowards; tho' you are.

1st. B. Hang him, let him alone, I see a Coward in his face.

Sir Will. If my face make any reflection Sir, 'tis against my will.

2d. B. Prithee Tom, let's affront him, and raise his spleen a little.

Sir Will. Raise my spleen! that's more than any Man cou'd ever boast of.

1st. B. You lye.

Sir Will. I am not angry yet, therefore I do not lye Sir: Now one of us must lye, I do not lye, Ergo...

1st. B. Damme! Sir have a care, Don't give me the lye, I shan't take it, Sir.

Sir Will. I need not, Sir, you give it your self.

1st. B. Well, Sir, what then? tho' I make bold with my self, every old Puppy shall not pretend to do it.

Sir Will. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

1st. B. Damme, Sir, what do you laugh at!

Sir Will. To let you see, that I am no puppy, Sir for puppies are brutes, now brutes have not risibility, But I laugh, therefore I am no puppy, ha! ha!

1st. B. Bloud and Thunder, Sir, dare you fight?

Sir Will. Not in cool blood, Sir; and I confess 'tis impossible to make me angry.

2d. B. I'll try that! Heark ye, don't you know you are a sniveling old Cuckold?

Sir Will. No, really, Sir.

2d. B. Why then I know you to be one.

Sir Will. Look you, Sir, my Reason weighs this in-

60 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,
injury, which is so light, it will not raise my anger in
the other scale.

1st. B. Oon's! what a tame old Prig's this? I'll give
you better weight then. I know who got all your
children.

Sir Will. Not so well as my Wife I presume ... Now
she tells me, 'twas my self, and I believe her too.

1st. B. She tells you so, because the poor rogue that
got 'em is not able to keep 'em.

Sir Will. Then my keeping them is charity.

1st. B. Bloud and Thunder, Sir, this is an affront to
us, not to be angry after all these provocations ... Dam-
me! Jack, let's fouse him in the Canal.

(as they lay hold on him.)

Enter Eld. worthy? Young Worthy, Nar. and Hill.

Y. Wor. S'dearth, what's here? Sir William in the
Rogues hands that affronted the Ladies ... Oh, forbear,
forbear ...

(Strikes them)

E. Wor. So Gentlemen, I thought you had fair warn-
ning before, now you shall pay for't. (Enter three
or four Sentinels.) Hearn you, honest Soldiers, pray
do me the favour to wash these Rascals in the canal,
and there's a Guinea for your trouble.

Bullies, Damme, Sir, we shall expect satisfaction.

[Exeunt Sold. dragging the Bullies.

Sir Will. Oh dear Gentlemen, I am obliged to you,
for I was just going to the canal my self, if you had
not come as you did,

E. Wor. Pray, Sir, what had you done to 'em?

Sir Will. Why hearing the Musick from my parlour
window, and being invited by the sweetness of the
evening, I ev'n took a walk to see if I could meet
with you, when the first objects that presented them-
selves were these Bullies, threatening to cut some bod-
ies throat: Now, I endeavouring to allay their fury,

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 61

occasioned their giving me scurrilous language and finding they cou'd not make me as angry as themselves, they off 'red to fling me into the water.

E. W. I am glad we slept to your deliverance.

Sir Will. Oh, I thank you, Gentlemen. ... I'll e'en go home, and recover my fright. Good-night, good-night to you all. [Exit.

E. W. Harry, see *Sir William* safe to his lodging.

[To his Servant.

Well, Ladies, I believe it's time for us to be walking too.

Hill. No pray let me engage you to stay a little longer: Yonder comes *Sir Novelty* and his Mistress, in pursuance of the design I told you of; pray have a little patience, and you will see the effect on't.

E. W. With all my heart, Madam. [They stand aside.

Enter *Sir Novelty* embracing *Flareit*, mask'd.

Sir Nov. Generous creature! this is an unexampled condescension to meet my passion with such early kindness: Thus let me pay my soft acknowledgments.

[Kisses her hand.

Hill. You must know he has mistaken her for another.

Fla. For Heaven's sake let me go, if *Hillaria* shou'd be at home before me, I am ruin'd for ever.

Nar. *Hillaria*! what do's she mean?

Sir Nov. *Narcissa's* reputation shall be ever safe, while my life and fortune can protect it.

Nar. O Gad let me go, do's the impudent creature take my name upon her ... I'll pull off her head-cloths.

Hill. Oh! fye! Cousin, what an ungenteel revenge wou'd that be! have a little patience.

Nar. Oh! I am in a flame. [Throwing back her hood.

Fla. But will you never see that common creature *Flareit* more?

Sir Nov. Never! never! Feed on such homely fare after so rich a banquet?

Fla.

62 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

Fla. Nay, but you must hate her too.

Sir Nov. That I did long ago for her stinking breath. 'Tis true, I have been led away; but I detest a strumpet: I am informed she keeps a Fellow under my nose, and for that reason, I would not make the settlement I lately gave her some hopes of: But e'en let her please her self, for now I am wholly yours.

Fla. Oh, now you charm me! but will you love me ever?

Sir Nov. Will you be ever kind?

Fla. Be sure you never see *Flareit* more.

Sir Nov. When I do, may this soft hand revenge my perjury.

Fla. So it shall, Villain!

[*Strikes him a box on the ear, and unmasks.*]

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir Nov. *Flareit*, the Devil!

Fla. What, will nothing but a maidenhead go down with you! Thou miserable conceited wretch .. Foh! my breath stinks do's it! I'm a homely puff! a strumpet, not worth your notice! Devil, I'll be reveng'd.

Sir Nov. Damn your revenge, I'm sure I feel it.

[*Holding his cheek.*]

Nar. Really, Sir Novelty, I am oblig'd to you, for your kind thoughts of me, and your extraordinary care of my reputation.

Sir Nov. S'death, she here! expos'd to half the Town! ... well, I must brasen it out however.

[*Walks unconcerned.*]

Fla. What! no pretence! no evasion now!

Sir Nov. There's no occasion for any, Madam.

Fla. Come, come swear you knew me all this while.

Sir Nov. No, faith, Madam, I did not know you: For if I had, you would not have found me so furious a Lover.

Fla. Furies and Hell! dares the Monster own his guilt! this is beyond all sufferance! thou wretch, thou thing

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 63

thing, thou animal, that I (to the everlasting forfeiture of my sense and understanding) have made a Man. For till thou knewest me, 'twas doubted if thou wert of humane kind. And dost thou think I'll suffer such a worm as thee to turn against me! No? when I do, may I be curs'd to thy embraces all my life, and never know a joy beyond thee.

Sir Nov. Why...wh...wh...what will your Ladyship's fury do Madam? [Smiling.]

Fla. Only change my lodging, Sir.

Sir Nov. I shall keep mine, Madam, that you may know where to find me when your fury is over... You see I am good natur'd.

[Walks by her.]

Fla. This bravery's affected: I know he loves me, and I'll pierce him to the quick: I have yet a surer way to fool him. (Aside.)

Hill. Methinks the Knight bears it bravely.

Nar. I protest the Lady weeps.

Y. Wor. She knows what she does, I'll warrant you.

E. W. Ay, Ay, the Fox is a better politician than the Lion.

Fla. (with tears in her eyes) Now Woman. [Aside.]
Sir Novelty, Pray Sir, let me speak with you.

Sir Nov. Ay, Madam.

Fla. Before we part (for I find I have irrecoverably lost your love) let me beg of you, that from this hour, you ne'er will see me more, or make any new attempts to deceive my easie temper: For I find my nature's such, I shall believe you, though to my utter ruin.

Sir Nov. Pray Heaven she be in earnest. [Aside.]

Fla. One thing more, Sir; since our first acquaintance, you have received several Letters from me; I hope you will be so much a Gentleman as to let me have 'em again: Those I have of yours shall be returned to-morrow morning. And now, Sir, wishing you as much happiness in her you love, as you once pretended

64 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

tended I cou'd give you ... I take of you my everlasting leave ... Farewel, and may your next Mistress love you till I hate you. *[... is going.]*

Sir Nov. So! now must I seem to periwade her. Nay, prithee my dear! why do you struggle for? whether wou'd you go?

Fla. Pray, Sir, give me leave to pass, I can't bear to stay. *[Crying.]*

Sir Nov. What is't that frightens you?

Fla. Your barbarous usage: let me go.

Sir Nov. Nay, if you are resolved, Madam, I won't press you against your will: Your humble servant, *(Leaves her)* And a happy riddance, *Adieu my vitals!*

[Flareit looks back.]

Fla. Ha! not move to call me back! so unconcerned! Oh! I cou'd tear my flesh, stab every feature in this dull, decaying face, that wants a Charm to hold him! Damn him! I loath him too! But shall my Pride now fall from such an height, and bear the torture unreveng'd? No, my very Soul's on fire, and nothing but the Villain's blood shall quench it: Devil, have at thee.

[Snatches Young Worthy's Sword, and runs at him.]

Y. Wor. Have a care, Sir.

Sir Nov. Let her alone Gentlemen, I'll warrant you.

[Draws, and stands upon his guard.]

[Young Worthy takes the Sword from her, and holds her.]

Fla. Prevented, Oh! I shall choak with boiling gall. Oh! oh! umh! let me go! I'll have his blood, his blood, his blood!

Sir Nov. Let her come, let her come, Gentlemen.

Fla. Death and Vengeance, am I become his sport! he's pleased, and smiles to see me rage the more! But he shall find no Fiend in Hell can match the fury of a disappointed Woman! ... Scorned! slighted! dismissed without a parting pang! Oh torturing thought! May all the racks Mankind e'er gave our easie sex, neglected love, decaying beauty, and hot raging lust light on me, if ever

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 65

e'er I cease to be the eternal plague of his remaining life; nay, after death,

...When his black Soul lies howling in despair,

I'd plunge to Hell and be his torments there.

[Exit in a fury.]

Eld. Wor. Sure Sir Novelty, you never loved this Lady, if you are so indifferent at parting.

Sir Nov. Why Faith Tom, to tell you the truth, her jealousy has been so very troublesome and expensive to me of late, that I have these three months sought an opportunity to leave her; but Faith I had always more respect to my life, than to let her know it before.

Hill. Methinks, Sir Novelty, you had very little respect to her life, when you drew upon her.

Sir Nov. Why what wou'd you have had me done, Madam? complemented her with my naked bosom? No! No! look ye, Madam, if she had made any advances, I cou'd have disarm'd her in second at the very first pass. ... But come, Ladies, as we walk, I'll beg your judgments in a particular nice fancy, that I intend to appear in the very first week the Court is quite out of mourning

Eld. Wor. With all my heart, Sir Novelty. ... Come Ladies, considering how little rest you'll have to-morrow-night, I think 'twere charity not to keep you up any longer.

Y. Wor. Nay as for that matter, the night before wedding is as unfit to sleep in; as the night following: Imagination's a very troublesome bedfellow: ... your pardon, Ladies, I only speak for my self.

Eld. Wor. See the coaches ready at S. James's-gate
[to his Servant. Exeunt.]

Enter two Servants. The S C E N E

Amanda's house.

1st. Ser. Come, come, make haste; is the supper, the musick ready? *E*

2. Ser

66 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

2d. Ser. It is, It is: Well! is he come?

1st. Ser. Ay, Ay, I came before to tell my Lady the news; That rogue *Sly* manag'd him rarely; he has been this half hour pretending to pick the lock of the Garden-door: Well poor Lady! I wish her good luck with him: For she's certainly the best Mistress living. Hark ye, is the Wine strong, as she order'd it? Be sure you ply him home. For he must have two or three bumpers to qualifie him for her design. See here he comes: away to your post. [Exeunt.]

Enter Loveless, conducted by Sly, Snap stealing after them.

Lov. Where the Devil will this Fellow lead me. Nothing but silence, and darkness. ...sure the house is haunted, and he has brought me to face the Spirit at his wonted hour.

Sly. There, there, in, in, ... Slip on your night-gown, and refresh your self; in the mean time I'll acquaint my Lady, that you are here: [Exit]

Lov. Snap.

Snap. Ay, Ay; Sir, I'll warrant you. [Exeunt.]

The Scene changes to an Anti-chamber; a Table Light, a Night Gown, and a Perruwig lying by: They re-enter.

Lov. Ha! what sweet lodgings are here? where can this end?

Snap. I gad, Sir, I long to know. ... Pray Heaven we are not deluded hither to be starv'd. ... Methinks I wish I had brought the remnants of my dinner with me.

Lov. Hark! I hear somebody coming! Hide yourself, Rascal? I wou'd not have you seen.

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 67

Snap. Well Sir, I'll line this trench in case of your being in danger. [*Gets under the Table.*]

Lov. Ha! This night-gown and peruke don't lie here for nothing.... I'll make my self agreeable. ..., I have baulk't many a woman in my time, for want of a clean shirt.... [*Puts 'em on.*]

*Enter Servants with a Supper, after them,
a Man, and a Woman.*

Lov. Ha! a Supper! Heaven send it be no vision! If the meat be real, I shall believe the Lady may prove flesh and blood.... Now am I damnably puzzled to know whether this be she, or not?

Madam ... [*Bows.*]

Wom. Sir my Lady begs your pardon for a moment.

Lov. Humh! her Lady! good!...

Wom. She's unfortunately detained by some female Visitors, which she will dispatch with all the haste imaginable; in the mean time, be pleased to refresh your self with what the house affords... Pray Sir sit down.

Lov. Not alone; Madam, you must bear me company?

Wom. To oblige you, Sir, I'll exceed my commission.

Snap. (*Under the Table*) Was there ever so unfortunate Dog? What the Devil put it in my head to hide my self before supper; why this is worse than being lock'd into a Closet, while another Man's a-bed with my Wife! I suppose my Master will take as much care of me too, as I shou'd of him, if I were in his place.

Wom. Sir, my humble service to you. [*Drinks.*]

Lov. Madam, your humble Servant: I'll pledge you.

Snap. when there's any danger I'll call you; in the mean time lie still dee hear. [*aside to Snap.*]

Snap. I gad I'll shift for my self then: (*snatches a look unseen*) so now I am arm'd, defiance to all danger.

Lov. Madam, your Lady's health.

Snap. Ay, Ay, let it go round, I say. [*Drinks*]

68 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

Wom. Well really, Sir, my Lady's very happy, that she has got loose from her relations: For they were always teizing her about you. But she defies 'em all now ... Come Sir, success to both your wishes. [*Drinks.*]

Lov. Give me a glass; methinks this health inspires me ... My heart grows lighter for the weight of Wine; ... Here, Madam, ... Prosperity to the Man, that ventures most to please her.

Wom. What think you of a Song to support this gaity?

Lov. With all my heart.

A Song here.

Lov. You have oblig'd me, Madam; I gad I like this Girl! she takes off her glass so feelingly, I am half persuaded she's of a thirsty love: If her Lady don't make a little haste, I find I shall present my humble service to her.

Enter a Servant, who whispers Amanda's Woman.

Wom. Sir I ask your pardon, my Lady has some commands for me, I will return immediately.

Lov. Your Servant. ... methinks this is a very new method of intriguing!

Snap. Pray Heaven it be new! for the old way commonly ended in a good beating: But a Pox of danger I say, and so here's good luck to you, Sir. [*Drinks.*]

Lov. Take heed, Rogue, you don't get drunk, and discover your self.

Snap. It must be with a fresh flask then; for this is expired *supernaculum*.

Lov. Lie close you Dog; I hear somebody coming: I am impatient till I see this Creature. This Wine has armed me against all thoughts of danger! Pray Heaven she be young, for then she can't want beauty. Ha! here she comes! Now! never failing Impudence assist me.

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 69

Enter Amanda loosely dress'd.

Am. Where's my love? O, let me fly into his arms, and live for ever there.

Lov. My Life, my Soul! (*runs and embraces her.*) by Heaven a tempting creature! Melting, soft and warm... as my desire... Oh, that I cou'd hide my face for ever thus, that undiscovered I might reap the harvest of a ripe desire, without the lingering pains of growing love. [*Kisses her hand.*]

Am. Look up, my Lord, and blefs me with a tender look, and let my talking eyes inform thee how I have languish'd for thy absence.

Lov. Let's retire, and chase away our fleeting cares with the raptures of untir'd love.

Am. Blefs me! your voice is strangely alter'd! Ha! defend me! who's this? help! within there?

Lov. So! I am discover'd! A pox on my tatling! that I cou'd not hold my tongue till I got to her Bed-chamber.

Enter Sly, and other Servants.

Sly. Did your Ladyship call help, Madam, what's the matter?

Am. Villain! Slave! who's this? what Ruffian have you brought me here... Dog, I'll have you murder'd! [*Sly looks in his face.*]

Sly. Blefs me! O Lord! dear Madam, I beg your pardon; as I hope to be saved, Madam, 'tis a mistake I took him for Mr....

Am. Be dumb! Eternal blockhead... here! Take this fellow, toss him in a blanket, and let him be turn'd out of my doors immediately.

Sly. O Pray! dear Madam, for Heavens sake, I am a ruin'd Man. ...

70 LOVE'S TAST'SHIFT; Or,

Snap. Ah! *Snap*, what will become of thee? Thou art fall'n into the hands of a Tygress that has lost her whelp; I have no hopes, but in my Masters impudence! Heaven strengthen it!

Am. I'll hear no more! away with him!

[*Exeunt the Servants with Sly.*]

Now, Sir, for you; I expected ...

Lov. A Man, Madam, did you not?

Am. Not a Stranger, Sir; But one that has a right and title to that welcome, which by mistake has been given to you:

Lov. Not an Husband, I presume! he wou'd not have been so privately conducted to your Chamber, and in the dark too!

Am. Whoever it was, Sir, is not your business to examine: But if you wou'd have civil usage, pray be gone.

Lov. To be used civilly, I must stay, Madam: There can be no danger with so fair a creature!

Am. I doubt you are mad, Sir.

Lov. While my senses have such luscious Food before'em, no wonder if they are in some confusion, each striving to be foremost at the Banquet, and sure my greedy eyes will starve the rest. [*Approaching her*]

Am. Pray, Sir, keep your distance; lest your feeling too be gratified./

Snap. O Lord! wou'd I were 100 leagues off a Sea!

Lov. Then briefly thus, Madam, know I like and love you: Now if you have so much generosity as to let me know what title my pretended rival has to your person, or your inclinations, perhaps the little hopes then may have of supplanting him, may make me leave your house. If not, my Love shall still pursue you tho' to the hazard of my life, which I shall not easily resign, while this sword can guard it, Madam.

Am. Oh, were this courage shown but in a better

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the FOOL IN FASHION. 71

cause, how worthy were the Man that own'd it?
(*Aside*.) What is it, Sir, that you propose by this unnecessary trifling? Know then, that I did expect a Lover, a Man perhaps more brave than you. One, that if present, wou'd have given you a shorter answer to your question.

Lov. I am glad to hear he's brave, however; it betrays no weakness in your choice: But if you'd still preserve, or raise the joys of love, remove him from your thoughts a moment, and in his room receive a warmer heart, a heart that must admire you more than he, because my passion's of a fresher date.

Am. What de'e take me for?

Lov. A Woman, and the most charming of your sex; one whose pointed eyes declare you form'd for Love, and tho' your words are flinty, your every look and motion all confess there's a secret fire within you, which must sparkle when the steel of Love provokes it. Come, now pull away your hand, and make me hold it faster.

Am. Nay, now you are rude, Sir.

Lov. If love be rudeness, let me be impudent: When we are familiar, rudeness will be love. No Woman ever thought a Lover rude after she had once granted him the favour.

Am. Pray Sir, forbear.

Lov. How can I? when my desire's so violent: Oh, let me snatch the rose dew from those distilling lips, and as you see your power to charm, so chide me with your pity. Why do you thus cruelly turn away your face? I own the blessing's worth an ages expectation, but it refused till merited, 'tis esteemed a debt. Wou'd you oblige your Lover, let loose your early kindness.

Am. I shall not take your counsel, Sir, while I know a Woman's early kindness is as little sign of her generosity, as her generosity is a sign of her discretion.

72 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

tion: Nor wou'd I have you believe I am so ill provided for, that I need listen to any Man's first addresses.

Lov. Why, Madam, wou'd not you drink the first time you had a thirst?

Am. Yes; but not before I had,

Lov. If you can't drink, yet you may kiss the cup, and that may give you inclination.

Am. Your pardon, Sir, I drink out of no body's glass but my own, as the Man I love confines himself to me, so my inclination keeps me true to him.

Lov. That's a cheat impos'd upon you, by your own vanity; For, when your back's turn'd, your very chamber-maid sips of your leavings, and becomes your rival. Constancy in love is all a cheat, Women of your understanding know it: The joys of love are only great when they are new, and to make 'em lasting, we must often change.

Am. Suppose 'twere a fresh Lover I now expected?

Lov. Why then, Madam, your expectation's answer'd; For, I must confess I don't take you for an old acquaintance, tho' somewhere I have seen a face not much unlike you. Come, your arguments are vain; for they are so charmingly delivered, they but inspire me the more, as blows in Battel raise the brave Man's courage. Come, every thing pleads for me, your Beauty, Wit, Time, Place, Opportunity, and my own excess of raging passion.

Am. Stand off: distant as the Globes of Heaven and Earth, that like a falling Star I may shoot with greater force into your arms, and think it Heaven to lie expiring there.

[Runs into his arms.

Snap. Ah! ah! ah! Rogue, the day's our own.

Lov. Thou sweetest, softest creature Heav'n e'er form'd; Thus let me twine my self about thy beauteous limbs, till struggling with the pangs of painful bliss, motionless and mute we yield to conquering Love, both vanquish'd, and both victors.

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 73

Am. Can all this heat be real? Oh, why has hateful vice such power to charm; while poor abandon'd virtue lies neglected? [*Aside.*]

Lov. Come, let us surfeit on our new-born raptures, let's waken sleeping nature with delight, till we may justly say, now! now! we live!

Am. Come on, let's indulge the transports of our present bliss, and bid defiance to our future change of fate. Who waits there?

Enter Amanda's Woman.

Am. Bring me word immediately if my apartment's ready, as I order'd it. O, I am charm'd, I have found the Man to please me now: one that can, and dares maintain the noble rapture of a lawless Love: I own my self a Libertine, a mortal Foe to that dull thing call'd Vertue, that meer disease of sickly Nature. Pleasure's the end of life, and while I'm Mistress of my self, and Fortune, I will enjoy it to the height. Speak freely then, (not that I love like other Women the nauseous pleasure of a little flattery) but answer me like a Man that scorns a lye: Do's my face invite you, Sir? May I from what you see of me, propose a pleasure to my self in pleasing you?

Lov. By Heaven you may; I have seen all Beauties that the Sun shines on, but never saw the Sun out-shin'd before: I have measur'd half the World in search of pleasure; but not returning home, had ne'er been happy.

Am. Spoken like the Man I wish might love me... Pray Heaven his words prove true. (*Aside.*) ... Be sure you never flatter me, and when my person tires you, confess it freely: For change when e'er you will, I'll change as soon: But while we chance to meet, still let it be with raging fire: No matter how soon it dies, provided the small time it lasts, it burn the fiercer.

Lov. O! wou'd the blinded World, like us, agree

74 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

to change, how lasting might the joys of love be? For thus beauty, tho' stale to one, might somewhere else be new; and while this Man were blest in leaving what he loath'd, another were new ravish'd in receiving what he ne'er enjoy'd.

Re-enter Amanda's Woman.

Wom. Madam, every thing is according to your order.

Lov. Oh! lead me to the scene of unupportable delight; rack me with pleasures never known before, till I lie gasping with convulsive passion: This night let us be lavish to our unbounded wishes.

*Give all our stock at once to raise the fire,
And revel to the height of loose desire.*

[*Exeunt.*]

Am. Wom. Ah! what an happy creature's my Lady now? There's many an unsatisfied Wife about Town, wou'd be glad to have her Husband as wicked as my Master, upon the same terms my Lady has him. Few Women I'm afraid wou'd grudge an husband the laying out his stock of love, that cou'd receive such considerable interest for it. Well... Now shan't I take one wink of sleep for thinking how they'll employ their time to-night... Faith, I must listen if I were to be hang'd for't.

[*Listens at the door.*]

Snap. So! my Master's provided for, therefore 'tis time for me to take care of my self: I have no mind to be lock'd out of my lodging: I fancy there's room for two in the maid's bed, as well as my Lady's. This same flask was plaguy strong wine... I find I shall storm, if she don't surrender fairly: By your leave damsel.

Wom. Bless me! who's this? O Lord! what wou'd you have? who are you?

Snap. One that has a right and title to your body, my

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 75

my master having already taken possession of your Lady's.

Wom. Let me go, or I'll cry out.

Snap. Ye lye, ye dare not disturb your Lady: but the better to secure you, thus I stop your mouth.

[*Kisses her.*]

Wom. Humh! ... Lord blefs me, is the Devil in you, tearing ones things!

Snap. Then show me your bed-chamber.

Wom. The devil shall have you first.

Snap. A shall have us both together then: here will I fix, (*takes her about the neck*) just in this posture till to morrow morning: In the mean time when you find your inclination stirring, prithee give me a call, for at present I am very sleepy. [*Seems to sleep.*]

Wom. Foh! how he stinks. (*He belches.*) Ah! what a whiff was there... the Rogue's as drunk as a Saylor with a twelve months arrears in his pocket; or a Jacobite upon a day of ill news. I'll ha' nothing to say to him... let me see, how shall I get rid of him... O! I have it! I'll soon make him sober I'll warrant him; So ho! Mr. What de'e call'um, where do you intend to lye to night?

Snap. Humh! why, where you lay last night, unless you change your lodging.

Wom. Well, for once I'll take pity of you... make no noise, but put out the candles, and follow me softly, for fear of disturbing my Lady.

Snap. I'll warrant ye! there's no fear of spoiling her musick, while we are playing the same tune.

The Scene changes to a dark entry, and they re-enter.

Wom. Where are you, lend me your hand.

Snap. Here! Here! make haste, my dear concupiscence.

Wom. Hold! stand there a little, while I open the door gently without waking the Footmen.

[*She feels about, and opens a trap-door.*]

Wom. Come along softly this way!

Snap. Whereabouts are you?

Wom.

76 LOVE's LAST SHIFT; Or,

Wom. Here, here, come strait forward.

[He goes forward, and falls into the Cellar]

Snap. O Lord! O Lord! I have broke my neck.

Wom. I am glad to hear him say so, however, I shou'd be loath to be hang'd for him. How de'e, Sir?

Snap. De'e, Sir! I am a league under ground.

Wom. Whereabouts are you?

Snap. In Hell, I think.

Wom. No! No! you are but in the road to it, I dare say: Ah dear! why will you follow lewd Women at this rate, when they lead you to the very gulph of destruction? I knew you wou'd be swallow'd up at last. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Snap. Ah, ye sneering whore!

Wom. Shall I fetch you a prayer-book, Sir? to arm you against the temptations of the flesh!

Snap. No! you need but show your own damn'd ugly face to do that... Hearn ye, either help me out, or I'll hang my self, and swear you murder'd me.

Wom. Nay, if you are so bloody-minded, good-night to ye, Sir.

[She offers to shut the door over him, and he catches hold on her.]

Snap. Ah! ah! ah! have I caught you! I gad we'll pig together now.

Wom. O Lord! Pray let me go, and I'll do any thing.

Snap. And so you shall before I part with you. *(Pulls her to him.)* And now, Master, my humble service to you.

[He pulls the door over them.]

ACT



ACT. V.

The SCENE Sir William Wisewou'd's
House.

Enter Eld. Worthy, Yo. Worthy, and a Lawyer with
Writings.

E. WORTHY.

ARE the Ladies ready?
Y. Wor. *Hillaria* is just gone up to hasten her
Cousin, and Sir William will be here immediately.

E. Wor. But heark you, Brother! I have consider'd
of it, and pray let me oblige you not to pursue your
design upon his five thousand pound: For, in short,
'tis no better than a cheat, and what a Gentleman
shou'd scorn to be guilty of. Is not it sufficient that I
consent to your wronging him of his Daughter?

Y. Wor. Your Pardon, Brother, I can't allow that
a wrong: For his Daughter loves me, her fortune, you
know, he has nothing to do with; and it's a hard case a
young woman shall not have the disposal of her heart.
Love's a fever of the mind, which nothing but our
own wishes can assuage, and I don't question but we
shall find marriage a very cooling cordial. ... And as to
the five thousand pound, 'tis no more than what he has
endeavour'd to cheat his Niece of.

E. Wor. What de'e mean, I take him for an honest Man!

Y. Wor. Oh! Very honest! As honest as an old Agent
to a new rais'd Regiment. ... No faith, I'll say that for
him, he will not do an ill thing, unless he gets by it.
In

78 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

In a word, this so very honest Sir *William*, as you take him to be, has offer'd me the refusal of your Mistress and upon condition I will secure him five thousand pound upon my day of marriage with her, he will secure me her person, and ten thousand pound, the remaining part of her fortune! There's a Guardian for ye! What think ye now, Sir?

E. W. Why I think he deserves to be serv'd in the same kind! I find age and avarice are inseparable! therefore e'en make what you can of him, and I will stand by you. But heark you, Mr. *Forge*, are you sure it will stand good in Law if Sir *William* signs the bond?

Law. In any court in *England*, Sir.

E. W. Then there's your fifty pieces, and if it succeeds, here are as many more in the same pocket to answer 'em: But mum... here comes Sir *William* and the Ladies.

Enter Sir *William* Wisewou'd, *Hillaria*, and *Narcissa*.

Sir Will. Good morrow Gentlemen! Mr. *Worthy*, give you joy! od so! If my heels were as light as my heart, I shou'd ha' much adoe to forbear dancing.. Here, here, take her, Man, (gives him *Narcissa's* Hand) she's yours, and so is her thousand pound a year, and my five thousand pound shall be yours too.

Y. W. You must ask me leave first.

[*Aside*]

Sir Will. Odso! is the Lawyer come?

E. W. He is, and all the writings are ready, Sir.

Sir Will. Come, come, lets see, Man! What's this! Odd! this Law is a plaguy troublesome thing; for now a-days it wont let a Man give away his own, without repeating the particulars five hundred times over: Whereas in former times a Man might have held his title to twenty thousand pound a year, in the compass of an Horn-book

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 79

now-a-days, and this age is more treacherous and distrustful than heretofore.

Sir Will. That is, Sir, because there are more Lawyers than heretofore. But come, what's this, prithee?

Law. These are the old writings of your daughter's fortune; this is Mr. *Worthy's* settlement upon her ... and this, Sir, is your Bond for five thousand pound to him: There wants nothing but filling up the blanks with the parties names; if you please, Sir, I'll do't immediately.

Sir Will. Do so.

Law. May I crave your daughter's Christian name; the rest I know, Sir.

Sir Will. *Narcissa!* prithee make haste ...

Y. Wor. You know your business... [*aside to the Lawyer.*]

Law. I'll warrant you sir.

[*sits to write.*]

Sir Will. Mr. *Worthy*, methinks your Brother does not relish your happiness as he shou'd do. Poor Man! I'll warrant he wishes himself in his Brother's condition!

Y. Wor. Not I, I'll assure you Sir.

Sir Will. Niece! Niece! have you no pity? prithee look upon him a little! Odd! he's a pretty young fellow ... I am sure he loves you, or he wou'd not have frequented my house so often! De'e think his Brother cou'd not tell my daughter his own story without his assistance! Pshaw! waw! I tell you, you were the beauty that made him so assiduous: Come come, give him your hand, and he'll soon creep into your heart, I'll warrant you: Come, say the word, and make him happy.

Hill. What, to make my self miserable, Sir, Marry, Man with out-an Estate?

Sir Will. Hang an estate! True love's beyond all riches! 'Tis all dirt.. meer dirt! ... beside, han't you fifteen thousand pound to your portion?

Hill. I doubt, Sir, you wou'd be loath to give him your daughter, tho' her fortune's larger.

Sir Will. Odd, if he loved her but half so well,

80 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

as he loves you, he shou'd have her for a word speaking.

Hill. But, Sir, this asks some consideration...

Nar. You see, Mr. *Worthy*, what an extraordinary kindness my Father has for you!

Y. Wor. Ay Madam, and for your Cousin too: But I hope with a little of your assistance we shall be both able very shortly to return it.

Nar. Nay, I was always ready to serve *Hillaria*; for Heaven knows I only marry to revenge her quarrel to my father: I cannot forgive his offering to sell her.

Y. Wor. O you need not take such pains, Madam, to conceal your passion for me; you may own it without a blush upon your wedding-day.

Nar. My passion! When did you hear me acknowledge any? If I thought you cou'd believe me guilty of such a weakness, tho' after I had marry'd you, I wou'd never look you in the face.

Y. Wor. A very pretty humour, this faith! (*Aside.*) What a world of unnecessary sins have we two to answer for? For she has told more lyes to conceal her Love, than I have sworn false oaths to promote it. Well, Madam, at present I'll content my self with your giving me leave to love.

Nar. Which if I don't give, you'll take I suppose.

Hill. Well, Uncle, I won't promise you, but I'll go to Church and see them marry'd; when we come back 'tis ten to one but I surprize you where you least think on.

Sir Will. Why, that's well said! ... Mr. *Worthy*, now! now's your time; Odd! I have so fir'd her, 'tis not in her power to deny you, Man... to her! to her! I warrant, her thy own, Boy! You'll keep your word, five thousand pound upon the day of Marriage.

Y. Wor. I'll give you my bond upon demand, Sir.

Sir Will. O! I dare take your word, Sir. ... Come Lawyer, have you done? Is all ready?

Law. All, Sir! This is your bond to Mr. *Worthy*: Will you be pleased to sign that first, Sir?

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The FOOL IN FASHION 81

Sir Will. Ay, ay; let's see! *The condition of this obligation* (*reads.*) Hum um ..., Come, lend me the pen. ... There ... *Mr. Worthy*, I deliver this as my Act and deed to you, and Heaven send you a good bargain .. Niece, will you witness it? (*which she does*) ... Come, Lawyer, your fist too. [*Lawyer witnesses it.*]

Law. Now, Sir, if you please to sign the joynture.

E. Wor. Come on.. *Sir William*, I deliver this to you for the use of your daughter. Madam, will you give your self the trouble once more? (*Hill sets her hand.*) Come, Sir... (*the Lawyer does the same.*) So now let a coach be called as soon as you please, Sir,

Sir Will. You may save that charge, I saw your own at the door.

E. Wor. Your pardon, Sir, that wou'd make our business too publick: For which reason, *Sir William*, I hope you will excuse our not taking you along with us.

[*Exit a Servant.*]

Sir Will. Ay, ay, with all my heart, the more privacy the less expence. But pray, what time may I expect you back again? For *Amanda* has sent to me for the writings of her husband's estate: I suppose she intends to redeem the mortgage, and I am afraid she will keep me there till dinner-time.

Y. Wor. Why, about that time she has obliged me to bring some of her nearest friends to be witnesses of her good or evil fortune with her husband: Methinks I long to know her succes; if you please, *Sir William*, we'll meet you there.

Sir Will. With all my heart... (*Enter a Servant.*) Well, is the coach come?

Serv. It is at the door, Sir.

Sir Will. Come, Gentlemen, no ceremony; your time's short.

E. Wor. Your Servant, *Sir William*.

[*Exeunt E. Wor. Y. Wor. Nar. and Hill.*]

Sir Will. So! here's five thousand pounds got with

82 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

a wet finger! This 'tis to read mankind! I knew a young Lover wou'd never think he gave too much for his Mistress! Well if I don't suddenly meet with some misfortune, I shall never be able to bear this tranquillity of mind. [Exit.

The SCENE changes to Amanda's House.

Enter Amanda Solo.

Am. Thus far my hopes have all been answer'd, and my disguise of vicious love has charm'd him e'vn to a madness of impure desire: ... But now I tremble to pull off the mask, lest barefac'd Vertue, shou'd fright him from my arms for ever. Yet sure there are charms in Vertue, nay stronger, and more pleasing far, than hateful vice can boast of! Else why have holy Martyrs perish'd for its sake? While lewdness ever gives severe repentance, and unwilling death. ... Good Heaven inspire my heart, and hang upon my tongue the force of truth and eloquence, that I may lure this wandring falcon back to Love and Vertue... He comes, and now my dreaded task begins!

Enter Loveless in new-cloaths.

Am. How fare you, Sir? De'e not already think your self confin'd? Are you not tired with my ealie love?

Lov. O! never! never! you have so fill'd my thoughts with pleasures past, that but to reflect on 'em is still new rapture to my soul, and the bliss must last while I have life or memory.

Am. No flattery. Sir! I lov'd you for your plain-dealing; and to preserve my good opinion, tell me, what think you of the grapes persuading juice! Come, speak freely, wou'd not the next tavern-bush put all this out of your head?

Lov. Faith, Madam to be free with you, I am apt to think you are in the right on't: For tho' Love and

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THE FOOL IN FASHION. 83

Wine are two very fine tunes, yet they make no music if you play them both together; separately they ravish us: Thus the Mistress ought to make room for the bottle, the bottle for the Mistress, and both to wait the call of inclination.

Am. That's generously spoken ... I have observ'd, Sir, in all your discourse you confess something of a Man, that has thoroughly known the world! ... Pray give me leave to ask you, of what condition you are, and whence you came?

Love. Why, in the first place, Madam, ... by birth I am a Gentleman; by ill friends, good wine, and false dice, almost a beggar: But by your Servant's mistaking me, the happiest Man, that ever Love and Beauty smil'd on.

Am. One thing more, Sir! Are you married? ... Now my fears. [*Aside.*

Lov. I was, but very young.

Am. What was your Wife?

Lov. A foolish loving thing, that built Castles in the air, and thought it impossible for a Man to forswear himself when he made love.

Am. Was she not vertuous?

Lov. Uumh! Yes faith, I believe she might, I was ne'er jealous of her.

Am. Did you ne'er love her?

Lov. Ah! most damnably at first, for she was with two Women of my maidenhead.

Am. What's become of her?

Lov. Why, after I had been from her beyond sea, about seven or eight years, like a very loving fool she died of the pip, and civilly left me the world free to range in.

Am. Why did you leave her?

Lov. Because she grew stale, and I cou'd not whore quiet for her: Besides she was always exclaiming against my extravagancies, particularly my gaming; which

84 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

she so violently oppos'd, that I fancy'd a pleasure in it, which since I never found; for in one month I lost between eight and ten thousand pound, which I had just before call'd in to pay my debts. This misfortune made my creditors come so thick upon me, that I was forc'd to mortgage the remaining part of my estate to purchase new pleasure, which I knew I could not do on this side the water, amidst the clamours of insatiate duns, and the more hateful noise of a complaining Wife.

Am. Don't you wish you had taken her counsel tho'?

Lov. Not I, faith, Madam.

Am. Why so?

Lov. Because 'tis to no purpose: I am Master of more Philosophy, than to be concern'd at what I can't help ... But now, Madam, .. Pray give me leave to inform my self as far in your condition.

Am. In a word, Sir, till you know me thoroughly, I must own my self a perfect riddle to you.

Lov. Nay, nay, I know you are a woman: But in what circumstances! Wife, or Widow?

Am. A Wife, Sir; a true, a faithful, & a vertuous Wife.

Lov. Humh! truly, Madam, your Story begins something like a riddle! a vertuous Wife say you! what and was you never false to your Husband?

Am. I never was by Heav'n! for him, and only him I still love above the world.

Lov. Good agen! pray, Madam, don't your memory fail you sometimes? because I fancy you don't remember what you do over night?

Am. I told you, Sir, I shou'd appear a riddle to you. But if my heart will give me leave, I'll now unloose your fetter'd apprehension ... But I must first amaze you more ... Pray, Sir, satisfy me in one particular ... 'tis this ... What are your undissembled thoughts of virtue? Now, if you can, shake off your loose unthinking part, and summon all your force of manly reason to resolve me.

Lov. Faith, Madam, methinks this is a very odd
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The FOOL IN FASHION. 85

question for a Woman of your character. I must confess you have amazed me.

Am. It ought not to amaze you! why shou'd you think I make a mock of virtue? But last night you allow'd my understanding greater, than is usual in our sex: if so, can you believe I have no farther sense of happiness than what this empty, dark and barren world can yield me! No, I have yet a prospect of a sublimer bliss, an hope, that carries me to the bright regions of eternal day.

Lov. Humh! I thought her last night's humour was too good to hold. I suppose by and by she will ask me to go to Church with her ... Faith, Madam, in my mind this discourse is a little out of the way. You told me I shou'd be acquainted with your condition, and at present that's what I had rather be inform'd of.

Am. Sir, you shall: But first, this question must be answer'd; your thoughts of virtue, Sir? ... By all my hopes of bliss hereafter, your answering this pronounces half my good or evil fate for ever: But on my knees I beg you do not speak till you have weigh'd it well ... Answer me with the same truth, and sincerity, as you wou'd answer Heav'n at your latest hour.

Lov. Your words confound me, Madam; some wondrous secret sure lies ripened in your breast, and seems to struggle for it's fatal birth! What is it I must answer you?

Am. Give me your real thoughts of Virtue, Sir; can you believe there ever was a Woman truly Mistress of it, or is it only a notion?

Lov. Let me consider, Madam, (*Aside*) What can this mean? Why is she so earnest in her demands, and begs me to be serious, as if her life depended on my answer ... I will resolve her, as I ought, as truth, and reason, and the strange occasion seems to press me ... Most of your sex confound the very name of virtue; for they wou'd seem to live without desires, which cou'd they doe, that were not virtue but the defect of

86 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or;

unperforming nature, and no praise to them: For who can boast of victory when they have no foe to conquer? Now she alone gives the fairest proofs of virtue, whose conscience and whose force of reason can curb her warm desires when opportunity wou'd raise 'em: That such a Woman may be found I dare believe.

Am. May I believe that from your soul you speak this undissembled truth?

Lov. Madam, you may. But still you rack me with amazement. why am I ask't so strange a question?

Am. I'll give you ease immediately ... Since then you have allow'd a Woman may be virtuous ... How will you excuse the Man who leaves the bosome of a Wife to qualified, for the abandon'd pleasures of deceitful prostitutes! Ruines her fortune! contemns her counsel! loaths her bed, and leaves her to the lingring miseries of despair and Love: while in return of all these wrongs, she his poor forsaken wife meditates no revenge, but what her piercing tears and secret vows to Heav'n for his conversion yield her: yet still loves on, is constant and unshaken to the last! can you believe, that such a Man can live without the stings of conscience, and yet be master of his senses! Conscience! did you ne'er feel the checks of it? did it never, never tell you of your broken vows?

Lov. That you shou'd ask me this confounds my reason ... And yet your words are utter'd with such a powerful accent, they have awak'd my soul, and strike my thoughts with horreur and remorse,...

(*Stands in a fixt posture.*)

Am. Then let me strike you nearer, deeper yet: ... But arm your mind with gentle pity first, or I am lost for ever.

Lov. I am all pity, all faith, expectation, and confused amazement: Be kind, be quick, & ease my wonder.

Am. Look on me well: revive your dead remembrance: And oh! for pity's sake (*Kneels*) hate me not for

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The FOOLIN FASHION 87

for loving long, faithfully; forgive this innocent attempt of a despairing passion, and I shall die in quiet.

Lov. Ha! speak on!

(*Amazed.*)

Am. It wonot be! ... The word's too weighty for my faulting tongue, and my Soul sinks beneath the fatal burthen. Oh!

(*Falls on the ground*)

Lov. Ha! she faints! look up fair creature! behold a heart that bleeds for your distress, and fain wou'd share the weight of your opressing sorrows! Oh! thou has rais'd a thought within me, that shocks my Soul.

Am. 'Tis done! (*rising*) the conflict's past, and Heav'n bids me speak undaunted. Know then, ev'n all the boasted raptures, of your last night's love you found in your Amanda's arms... I am your Wife.

Lov. Ha!

Am. For ever blest or miserable, as your next breath shall sentence me.

Lov. My Wife! impossible! is she not dead! How shall I believe thee?

Am. How time and my afflictions may have alter'd me I know not: But here's an indelible confirmation (*bare her arm.*) These speaking characters, which in their cheerful bloom our early passions mutually recorded.

Lov. Hah! 'tis here... 'tis no illusion, but my real name; which seems to upbraid me as a witness of my perjur'd love... Oh I am confounded with my guilt, and tremble to behold thee... Pray give me leave to think.

(*turns from her.*)

Am. I will: (*kneels.*) but you must look upon me. For only eyes can hear the Language of the eyes, and mine have sure the tenderest tale of Love to tell, that ever misery, at the dawn of rising hope cou'd utter.

Lov. I have wrong'd you. Oh! rise! basely wrong'd you! and can I see your face?

Am. One kind, one pitying look cancels those wrongs for ever: and oh! forgive my fond presuming passion;

88 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

tor from my soul I pardon and forgive you all: all, all but this, the greatest, your unkind delay of love.

Lov. Oh! seal my pardon with thy trembling lips, while with this tender grasp of fond reviving love I seize my bliss and stifle all thy wrongs for ever.

(Embraces her)

Am. No more; I'll wash away their memory in tears of flowing joy.

Lov. Oh thou hast rous'd me from my deep lethargy of vice! for hitherto my soul has been enslav'd to loose desires, to vain deluding follies, and shadows of substantial bliss. But now I wake with joy to find my rapture real ... Thus let me kneel and pay my thanks to her, whose conquering Virtue has at last subdu'd me. Here will I fix, thus prostrate, sigh my shame, and wash my crimes in never ceasing tears of penitence.

Am. O rise! this posture heaps new guilt on me. Now you overpay me

Lov. Have I not us'd thee like a Villain! For almost ten long years depriv'd thee of my love, and ruin'd all thy fortune! But I will labour, dig, beg or starve, to give new proofs of my unfeign'd affection.

Am. Forbear this tenderness, least I repent of having mov'd your soul so far. You shall not need to beg: Heav'n has provided for us beyond its common care. 'Tis now near two years since my uncle Sir William Wealthy sent you the news of my pretended death, knowing the extravagance of your temper, he thought it fit you shou'd believe no other of me; and about a month after he had sent you that advice, poor man, he dyed, and left me in the full possession of two thousand pounds a year, which I now cannot offer as a gift, because my duty, and your lawful right, makes you the undisputed master of it

Lov. How have I labour'd for my own undoing, while in despite of all my follies, kind Heav'n resolv'd my happiness,

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The FOOL IN FASHION, 89

Enter a Servant to Amanda.

Ser. Madam, Sir William Wisewoud has sent your Ladyship the writings you desired him, and says he'll wait upon you immediately.

Am. Now Sir, if you please to withdraw a while, you may inform your self how fair a fortune you are Master of.

Lov. None, none that can outweigh a virtuous mind; while in my arms I thus can circle thee I grasp more treasure, than in a day the posting Sun can travel o'er. Oh! why have I so long been blind to the perfections of thy mind and person! Not knowing thee a wife, I found thee charming beyond the wishes of luxurious Love. Is it then a name, a word, shall rob thee of thy worth? Can fancy be a surer guide to happiness than reason? Oh! I have wander'd like a benighted wretch, and lost my self in lifes unpleasing journey.

'Twas heedless fancy first, that made me stray.

But Reason now breaks forth, and lights me on my way.

[*Exeunt.*]

The Scene changes to an Entry. Enter 3 or 4 Servants.

1 *Ser.* Prithee Tom make hast below there; my Lady has order'd dinner at half an hour after one precisely. Look out some of the red that came in last.

} *Two of the Servants hawl Snap and Amanda's Woman out of the cellar.*

2 *Ser.* Come Sir, come out here, and show your face. *Wom.* Oh I am undone; ruin'd!

2 *Serv.* Pray Sir, who are you, and what was your business, and how in the devil's name came you in here?

Snap. Why truly, Sir, the flesh led me to the

90 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Qr,

cellar-door; but I believe the devil push't me in ... that Gentlewoman can inform you better.

3 *Serv.* Pray Mrs. Anne how came you two together in the cellar?

Wom. Why he ... he ... pu ... pu ... pull'd me in.

(Sobbing.)

3 *Serv.* But how the devil came he in?

Wom. He te ... te ... fe ... tell in.

2 *Serv.* How came he into the house?

Wom. I don ... do ... don't know.

2 *Serv.* Ah! you are a crocodile; I thought what was the reason I cou'd never get a good word from you! What, in a cellar too! But come, Sir we will take care of you however. Bring him along, we will first carry him before my Lady; and then tofs him in a blanket.

Snap. Nay but Gentlemen! dear Gentlemen. [Exeunt.]

[Enter Loveless, Amanda, E. Wor. Y. Wor. Nar. and Hill.]

E. Wor. This is indeed a joyful day, we must all congratulate your happiness.

Am. Which while our lives permit us to enjoy, we must still reflect with gratitude on the generous author of it: Sir we owe you more than words can pay you.

Lov. Words are indeed too weak, therefore let my gratitude be dumb till it can speak in actions.

Y. W. The success of the design I thought on sufficiently rewards me.

Hill. When I reflect upon Amanda's past afflictions, I cou'd almost weep to think of this unexpected change of fortune.

E. Wor. Methinks her fair example shou'd persuade all constant Wives ne'er to repine at unrewarded virtue. Nay ev'n my Brother being the first promoter of it

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 91

has atton'd for all the looseness of his character.

Lov. I never can return his kindness.

Nar. In a short time, Sir, I suppose you'll meet with an opportunity, if you can find a receipt to preserve Love after his honey moon's over.

Lov. The receipt is easily found, Madam; Love's a tender plant which can't live out of a warm bed: you must take care with undissembled kindness to keep him from the nothern blast of jealousy.

Nar. But I have heard your experienced Lovers make use of coldness, and that's more agreeable to my inclination.

Lov. Coldness, Madam, before marriage, like throwing a little water upon a clear fire, makes it burn the fiercer: but after marriage you must take care to lay on fresh fuel.

Nar. Oh fie, Sir, how many examples have we of mens hating their wives for being too fond of 'em?

Lov. No wonder Madam, you may stifle a flame by heaping on too great a load.

Nar. Nay Sir, if there be no other way of destroying his passion, for me he may love til doomsday.

E. W. Humph! don't you smell powder, Gentlemen? Sir *Novelty* is not far off.

Lov. What not our fellow Collegian, I hope, that was expell'd the university for beating the proctor.

E. W. The same.

Lov. Does that weed grow still?

E. W. Ay faith, and as rank as ever, as you shall see, for here he comes.

Enter Sir Novelty.

Sir No. Ladies your humble Servant; dear *Loveliness* let me embrace thee, I am o'er-joy'd at thy good fortune: stop my vitals... the whole Town rings of it already... my Lady *Tattletongue* has tired a pair of horses

92 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

ses in spreading the news about. Hearing Gentlemen that you were all met upon an extraordinary good occasion, I cou'd not resist this opportunity of joyning my joy with yours: for you must know I am...

Nar. Married, Sir!

Sir No. To my liberty, Madam, I am just parted from my Mistress.

Nar. And pray Sir, how do you find your self after it?

Sir No. The happiest Man alive, Madam, pleasant, easie, gay, light, and free as air: hah! (*Capers*) I beg your Ladyship's pardon, Madam, but upon my soul I cannot confine my rapture.

Nar. Are you so indifferent Sir?

Sir No. Oh! Madam she's engag'd already to a *Temple Beau*! I saw 'em in a coach together so fond! and bore it with as unmov'd a countenance as *Tom Worthy* does a thundering jest in a Comedy when the whole house roars at it.

Y. W. Pray Sir, what occasion'd your separating?

Sir No. Why this Sir, ... you must know she being still possess'd with a brace of implacable devils call'd revenge and jealousy, dogg'd me this morning to the chocolate-house, where I was oblig'd to leave a Letter for a young foolish girl, that ... (you will excuse me Sir) which I had no sooner delivered to the maid of the house; but whip she snatches it out of her hand, flew at her like a dragon, tore off her head cloths, flung down three or four setts of lemonade-glasses, dash't my Lord *Whiffle's* chocolate in his face, cut him over the nose And had like to have strangled me in my own steinkirk!

Lov. Pray Sir, how did this end?

Sir No. Comically, stop my vitals! for in the cloud of powder, that she had batter'd out of the *Beaux* periwigs I stole away: after which I sent a friend to her with an offer, which she readily accepted: Three hundred pound a year during life, provided she would renounce all claims to me, and resign my person to my own disposal.

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 93

E. W. Methinks, *Sir Novelty*, you were a little too extravagant in your Settlement, considering how the price of Women is fallen.

Sir No. Therefore I did it... to be the first man shou'd raise their price: For the Devil take me, but the Women of the Town now came down so low, that my very Footman, while he kept my place t'other day at the Playhouse, carry'd a Mask out of the Side-Box with him, and stop my vitals, the Rogue is now taking physick for't.

Enter the Servants with Snap.

1 Ser. Come bring him along there.

Lov. How now! hah! *Snap* in hold. Pray let's know the business, release him Gentlemen.

1 Ser. Why, an't please you, Sir, this Fellow was taken in the Cellar with my Lady's Woman! she says he kept her in by force, and was rude to her: she stands crying here without, and begs her Ladyship to do her justice.

Am. Mr. *Loveless*, we are both the occasion of this misfortune, and for the poor Girl's reputation-sake, something shou'd be done.

Lov. Snap, answer me directly, have you lain with this poor Girl?

Snap. Why, truly Sir, imagining you were doing little less with my Lady, I must confess, I did commit familiarity with her, or so Sir.

Lov. Then you shall marry her, Sir. No reply unless it be your promise.

Snap. Marry her, O Lord, Sir! after I have lain with her? why, Sir! how the Devil can you think a man can have any stomach to his dinner, after he has had three or four slices off of the spit?

Lov. Well Sirrah, to renew your appetite and because you hast been my old acquaintance, I'll give thee an hundred l. with her, and thirty pound a year during life, let you up in some honest employment.

Snap.

64 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

Snap. Ah! Sir, now I understand you: Heav'n reward you! Well Sir, I partly find that the gentile scenes of our lives are pretty well over; and I thank Heav'n, that I have so much grace left, that I can repent, when I have no more opportunities of being wicked, ... Come spouse, (*She enters*) here's my hand, the rest of my body shall be forth coming. Ah! little did my Master and I think last night that we were robbing our own orchards! [*Exeunt:*

E. W. Brother, stand upon your guard! here comes Sir William.

Enter Sir William Wisewoud.

Sir W. Joy, joy, to you all! Madam, I congratulate your good fortune. Well my dear rogue must not I give thee joy too? ha!

Y. W. If you please, Sir: but I confess, I have more than I deserve already.

Sir W. And art thou marry'd?

Y. W. Yes Sir, I am marry'd!

Sir W. Odso, I am glad on't: I dare swear, thou dost not grudge me the 5000 *l.*

Y. W. Not I really Sir: you have given me all my foul cou'd wish for, but the addition of a Fathers blessing. (*kneels with Narcissa.*)

Sir W. Humh! what dost thou mean? I am none of thy father.

Y. W. This Lady is your daughter, Sir, I hope.

Sir W. Prithee get up! prithee get up! thou art stark mad! true, I believe she may be my daughter, well, and so Sir!

Y. W. If she be not, I'm certain she's my wife, Sir.

Sir W. Humh! Mr. *Worthy*, pray Sir do me the favour to help me to understand your Brother a little... do you know any thing of his being married.

E. W. Then without any abuse, Sir William, he married your daughter this very morning, not an hour ago, Sir.

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The FOOL IN FASHION 95

Sir W. Pray Sir whose consent had you, who advis'd you to it?

Y. W. Our mutual love and your consent Sir, which these writings, entitling her to a thousand pound a year, and this bond, whereby you have oblig'd your self to pay me five thousand pound upon our day of marriage, are sufficient proofs of.

Sir W. He, he! I gave your Brother such a bond, Sir.

Y. W. You did so; but the obligation is to me; look there Sir.

Sir W. Very good! this is my hand I must confess Sir: and what then?

Y. W. Why then I expect my five thousand pound; Sir. pray Sir, do you know my name?

Sir W. I am not drunk Sir, I am sure it was *Worthy* and *Jack*, or *Tom*, or *Dick*, or something.

Y. W. No Sir, I'll show you... tis *William*, look you there Sir: you shou'd have taken more care of the Lawyer Sir, that fill'd up the blank.

E. W. So now his eyes are open.

Sir W. And have you married my daughter against my consent, and trickt me out of 5000 l. Sir?

Hill. His brother, Sir, has married me too with my consent, and I am not trickt out of 5000 l.

Sir W. Insulting witch! look ye Sir! I never had a substantial cause to be angry in my life before: but now I have reason on my side, I will indulge my indignation most immoderately. I must confess, I have not patience to wait the slow redress of a tedious Law-suit: therefore am resolv'd to right my self the nearest way... draw, draw Sir, you must not enjoy my five thousand pound, tho' I sling as much more after it in procuring a pardon for killing you. (*They hold him.*) Let me come at him, I'll murder him! I'll cut him! I'll tear him! I'll spoil him, and eat him! a rogue! a dog! a curs'd dog! cut-throat, murdering dog!

E. W. O fie, *Sir William*, how monstrous is this passion?

Sir

96 LOVE'S LAST SHIFT; Or,

Sir W. You have disarm'd me, but I shall find a time to poison him.

Lov. Think better on't *Sir William*: your daughter has married a Gentleman, and one whose love entitles him to her person.

Sir W. Ay, but the 5000 *l.* *Sir!* why the very report of his having such a Fortune, will ruin him. I warrant you within this week he will have more duns at his chamber in a morning, than a gaming Lord after a good night at the Groom-Porters, or a Poet upon the fourth day of his new Play. I shall never be pleas'd with paying it against my own consent, *Sir*

Hill. Yet you wou'd have had me done it *Sir William*. But however I heartily wish you wou'd as freely forgive *Mr. Worthby*, as I do you *Sir*.

Sir W. I must confess this girls good nature makes me ashamed of what I have offer'd. But *Mr. Worthby* I did not expect such usage from a man of your character. I always took you for a Gentleman.

E. W. You shall find me no other, *Sir*: Brother a word with you.

Lov. *Sir William*, I have some obligations to this Gentleman, and have so great a confidence in your daughter's merit, and his love, that I here promise to return you your 5000 *l.* if after the expiration of one year, you are then dissatisfied in his being your son in law.

Y. W. But see Brother, he has forestall'd your purpose.

E. W. *Mr. Loveless*, you have been before-hand with me, but you must give me leave to offer *Sir William* my joint-security for what you have promised him.

Lov. With all my heart *Sir*. Dare you take our bond *Sir William*?

Y. W. Hold Gentlemen! I shou'd blush to be oblig'd to that degree: therefore *Sir William*, as the first proof of that respect and duty I owe a Father, I here unaskt return your bond, and will henceforth expect nothing from you, but as my conduct shall deserve.

Am. This is indeed a generous act; methinks 'twould pity it shou'd go unrewarded.

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The FOOL IN FASHION. 97

Sir W. Nay, now you vanquish me! after this I can't suspect your future conduct: there Sir! 'tis yours, I acknowledge the bond, and with you all the happiness of a bridal bed. Heav'n's blessing on you both; now rise my Boy, and let the world know 'twas I set you upon your legs again.

Y. W. I'll study to deserve your bounty, Sir.

Lov. Now *Sir William*, You have shown your self a Father. This prudent action has secured your daughter from the usual consequence of a stol'n marriage; a parents curse. Now she must be happy in her love while you have such a tender care on't.

Am. This is indeed a happy meeting, we all of us have drawn our several prizes in the lottery of human life: Therefore I beg our joys may be united. Not one of us must part this day. The Ladies I'll intreat my guests.

Lov. The rest are mine, and I hope will often be so.

Am. 'Tis yet too soon to dine: therefore to divert us in the mean time, what think you of a little musick, the subject perhaps not improper to this occasion?

E. W. 'Twill oblige us, Madam, we are all lovers of it.

The SCENE draws, and discovers *Love* seated on a Throne, attended with a
CHORUS.

Fame.

Hail! hail! Victorious Love!
To whom all hearts below,
With no less pleasure bow,
Than to the thundering Jove,
The happy Souls above.

Chorus. Hail, &c.

Enter Reason.

Reason. Cease, cease fond fools your empty noise,
And follow not such joys,

G

Love

98 LOVE'S TAST SHIFT; Or,

*Love gives you but a short-liv'd bliss,
But I bestow immortal happiness.*

Love. *Rebellious Reason, talk no more.
Of all my Slaves, I thee abhor:
But thou, alas! dost strive in vain
To free the Lover from a pleasing chain,
In spite of Reason, Love shall live and reign.* }

Chorus. *In ipight, &c.*

A Martial Symphony.

Enter Honour.

Honour. *What wretch wou'd follow Loves alarms;
When Honours Trumpet sounds to arms?
Heark! how the warlike notes inspire
In ev'ry breast a glowing fire.*

Love. *Hark how it swells with Love and soft desire.*

Honour. *Behold, behold the married state
By thee too soon betray'd,
Repenting now too late.*

Enter Marriage with his yoke.

Marriage. *O! tell me cruel God of Love,
Why didst thou my thoughts possess
With an eternal round of happiness?
And yet alas! I lead a wretched life,
Doom'd to this galling yoke.. the emblem of a wife.*

Love. *Ungrateful wretch! how dar'st thou Love upbraid?
I gave thee raptures in the bridal-bed.*

Marriage *Long since alas! the airy vision's fled,
And I with wandring flames my passion feed.* 0

the FOOL IN FASHION. 99

O! tell me pow'rful God
Where I shall find
My former peace of mind !

Love. Where first I promis'd thee a happy life,
There thou shalt find it in a virtuous wife.

Love, & } Go home unhappy wretch, and mourn.
Fame. } For all thy guilty passion past,
There thou shalt to those joys return,
Which shall for ever, ever last.

End with the first Chorus.

Lov. 'Twas generously design'd, and all my life
to come shall show how I approve the moral. Oh!
Amanda! once more receive me to thy arms; and
while I am there, let all the world confess my happi-
ness. By my example taught let every man, whose
fate has bound him to a married life, beware of letting
loose his wild desires: for if experience may be allow'd
to judge, I must proclaim the folly of a wandering
passion: the greatest happiness we can hope on earth.

And sure the nearest to the joys above,
Is the chaste rapture of a virtuous Love.

F I N I S



